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ABSTRACT

This paper on students who learn differently, primarily students with specific learning disabilities or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/HD), examines the topic in the context of American families living abroad based on a review of the literature and a survey of member clubs of the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas. Background information covers topics such as the nature of ADD/HD, symptoms of special learning problems, factors that might complicate recognition, why students learn differently, consequences of ignoring the fact that students learn differently, and student evaluation. Special considerations for internationally mobile families are organized into suggestions for before and after the move and anytime. Schooling suggestions cover international schools, host country or national schools, choosing a school, techniques for teachers, the computer as a teaching aid, continuing education for teachers, and tips for college-bound students. The paper also provides an extensive bibliography and list of resource materials including books, computer programs, tapes, Web sites, and useful addresses. Also included are eight attachments such as the survey questionnaire, a list of famous people with attention deficit disorders and learning disabilities, a brochure of advice for parents, organizational materials, and a report detailing the findings of a follow-up survey. (Contains approximately 50 references.) (DB)

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Students Who Learn Differently

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas

Educational Support Committee

Athens, Greece

March 1998

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OPEL
Opel Belgium

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We would also like to express our gratitude to the **European Children in Crisis**, an English-speaking support group based in Brussels, for the contribution of their excellent booklet, *Children with Specific Learning Difficulties*.

We thank all of these organizations for their very kind support of the activities of the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas and the work of the Educational Support Committee.

THE FAWCO EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE

This study represents the work and dedication of many individuals and organizations. However for reasons of confidentiality, for the most part only the names of the participating clubs and organizations will be mentioned here and in the study itself. Most unfortunately, there is still a stigma attached to the fact that some students learn differently. It is hoped that this report might help to remove some misconceptions, and that in the future names might be proudly displayed without any fear of condescension, isolation, or possible penalty.

FAWCO Clubs that responded to the questionnaire:

Americans in Alsace
AWC of Antigua & Barbuda
AWC of Antwerp
AWC of Basel
AW of Berkshire and Surrey
AWC of Bern
AWC of Brussels
AIWC of Casablanca
AWC of Denmark
AWC of Dublin
AW of the Eastern Province
AWC of Edinburgh
AIL of Florence
US Women's Club of Fyn
AWC of Gothenburg
AWO of Greece
AWC of Hamburg
AAW in Ireland
AWC of Kristianstad
AWC in Liechtenstein
AWC of London
AWC of Luxembourg
AWC of Madrid
AWC of Oslo
AAWE Paris
AWA of Rabat
AWA of Rome
AW of South Wales
AWC of the Taunus
AWC of The Hague
AWA of Vienna
AWC of Zurich

Participating Organizations:

ASChiLD (Association Supporting Children Who Learn Differently), Antwerp
Children with Special Needs, American Women of Berkshire & Surrey, England
Dyspel: Dyslexia & Special Needs Group, Luxembourg

European Children in Crisis, Brussels
Parents United for children who learn differently, The Hague

Participating Schools:
In addition to the above mentioned organizations, many employees of international and national schools participated in this study either by filling out the questionnaire directly or by providing information for it, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their kind assistance and for their interest.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We live in a world that holds out many of its greatest prizes to those who can read and write. In other words, to those who can function effectively in a symbolic, linguistic medium. The ability to merely express one's thoughts verbally is not enough. Written words and sentences are needed to carry thoughts, needs and wishes to others over time and distance, whether it be in a note to a friend or over the Internet to a colleague on the other side of the world. Therefore, formal education rightly strives to produce students who are skilled in these abilities.

But unfortunately, many of the techniques of teaching in practice today are not suitable for all types of learners, and too many students who are of normal or above normal intelligence are mislabeled, mistaught and dismissed as being stupid, lazy or inattentive.

Recognition of a problem or a difficulty when one is far away from traditional support systems can be very daunting. Family, friends and care systems are no longer easily and economically accessible for advice and dialogue. Suddenly expectations and preconceptions as to how things should be done and what steps could be taken disappear, often leaving the displaced family members feeling confused, resentful and, perhaps most importantly, alone. These feelings can be multiplied ten- or a hundredfold when facing a foreign culture and an unfamiliar language.

When you are a student or a family member of a student who learns differently, the problems you face in getting the help you need can seem overwhelming. If you had a broken leg, everyone could see your problem and everyone would be happy to assist you in getting the appropriate care. Even in a foreign country, this would not be a very great problem. But when the problem is invisible, and when sometimes no one, including the parents, the teachers, or the student themselves, are aware that a problem even exists, getting the appropriate help can be very difficult. Indeed and most regrettably, sometimes the problem is never recognized, and appropriate help is never offered.

For the purposes of this study, students who learn differently will refer to those people who are more commonly described as having specific learning difficulties, students who are able, or should be able, to be mainstreamed (in other words, taught in the normal classroom setting) providing they receive the necessary, extra help.

Families whose main financial support comes from employment in international companies can become vulnerable to discrimination in the job market. Sometimes lack of promotions result if

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family members require special support that cannot be found in international settings and the family is unable to accept a foreign assignment.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize those students whose learning abilities do not fall within these parameters, such as students with exceptional ability who might function better in special programs or schools for gifted students, or those students whose needs demand highly specialized schooling. Perhaps in the future another study might be done that would explore the options available to such students in the context of expatriate living.

This study was originally going to be titled, "Children Who Learn Differently." But in recognition of the fact that we continue to learn all throughout our lives, and the fact that people who learn differently do not cease to learn differently just because they are no longer children, the name was changed to "Students Who Learn Differently."

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To heighten awareness of how and why some students learn differently than others by examining some current thought on the subject.
2. To highlight some of the challenges facing students, family members and educational professionals when a student learns differently.
3. To suggest positive action that can be taken in an international setting.
4. To help alleviate negative feelings through sharing knowledge of how others have dealt with similar situations.

METHOD OF STUDY

In the autumn of 1997, a cover letter and questionnaire (see Attachment #1) were sent out to the then 64 member clubs of the Federation. Of the 64 clubs surveyed, 32 responded and of that number, 24 completed the questionnaire. In addition to the information gathered as a result of this questionnaire, various organizations supporting students who learn differently were consulted, seminars on the subject were attended, and books, articles, Websites and videos were researched.

This study was compiled and presented by the chair of the Educational Support Committee, Susan van Alsenoy, AWC Antwerp.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

None of the products, programs or resource materials presented in this study are endorsed by the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas or the Educational Support Committee. Any opinions expressed are the personal or professional opinions of individuals and do not necessarily represent the views of FAWCO clubs or their members.

LEARNING DIFFERENTLY

We all are individuals and we all learn differently from one another. For example, some of us are auditory learners and others of us are visual learners. Some of us have to hear something in order for it to make any sense, and some of us have to see it, or picture it in our minds, before it can sink in. Many of us are able to get through the prescribed educational curriculum sufficiently to pass our exams and obtain our diplomas. And many of us are not.

This report will be examining some of the issues and opportunities facing some students who are not able to succeed in the current educational system without some extra help. Theses are students who are of normal or above normal intelligence, students who suffer no obvious mental impairment or emotional problem, and students who have had the opportunity and the motivation to learn.

Most of the terminology that refers to students who learn differently is derogatory. At best, they are classified as having specific learning difficulties. Other times they are referred to as being learning disabled. At worst, they are said to suffer from minimal brain dysfunction. Just a short while ago, they called it a brain "malfunction."

But is this really the case? Autopsies on "normal" and dyslexic brains have shown that the "normal" brain shows an asymmetrical development in one sphere while the dyslexic brain appears to develop evenly on both sides. In other words, the dyslexic mind appears to use the whole brain simultaneously while the area associated with language acquisition in the "normal" brain shows an over, or one-sided, development.[1]

Equal development of both spheres permits learning differently students to enjoy special gifts. They tend to "see" things 3-dimensionally. They have a unique kind of spatial awareness. This allows them, among other things, to be excellent architects, inventors, directors for film and theatre, interior decorators, and teachers for other learning differently students.

Current estimates of the percentage of people who learn differently range as high as 15%. That is more than 1 out of 7 people. In all probability this percentage will rise. Parents and teachers are becoming better educated in recognizing students who learn differently. Additionally, the testing methods themselves are becoming more refined.

WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

It is very appropriate that this study is being introduced in Greece for two reasons. The first has to do with the fact that the great Athenian philosopher, Socrates, adopted the Delphic saying, "know thyself" as his personal motto. By learning more about how we learn, we indeed learn more about ourselves. The second reason is because the word "dyslexia" comes from the Greek, "dys" meaning "difficulty" and "lexis" meaning "language and letters."

---

[1] Masiand, Richard L. "Neurological Aspects of Dyslexia." ***Dyslexia Research and it Applications to Education***, edited by G. Th. Pavlidis and T. R. Miles. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd. 1981.

At last count, there were at least 86 different definitions of dyslexia, and most of these were exclusionary. It's not this, it's not that, it's not the other thing, so we'll call it dyslexia. However, most people agree that it involves difficulty with the perception and/or execution of written, and sometimes spoken, language.

WHAT IS ADD/HD?

ADD/HD is short for Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity Disorder. These are conditions that are characterized by problems with sustaining attention, controlling impulses and responding appropriately in different situations.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms for dyslexia and ADD/HD are being listed together because it happens that some students can experience both to a greater or lesser extent. Indeed, many people group these phenomena together under the heading of specific learning difficulties. Although the behaviors and types of treatment might be different, very often recommended mainstream teaching methods and parental support are quite similar for both.

Pre-school recognition: It is important to be aware of these signs because early recognition can lead to early and effective remedial treatment and the prevention of damage to the self-esteem of the student. The following indicators are taken from a pamphlet entitled, *Dyslexia Your First Questions Answered*, prepared by Anna McNair Scott for the British Dyslexia Association:

- later than expected clear speech and a persistent tendency to jumble words and phrases
- persistent difficulty with tasks such as dressing efficiently, doing up buttons, tying shoelaces
- unusual clumsiness and difficulty with co-ordinated activities such as hopping and skipping, and catching or kicking balls
- poor concentration
- family history of similar difficulties.[2]

In answer to the question, "can anything be done before school age?", Ms. Scott recommends finding detailed suggestions by reading "Early Help, Better Future," by Jean Augur which is available from the British Dyslexia Association (see *Useful Addresses*).

Later Recognition:

- reversal of letters and numbers
- poor spelling
- mirror writing
- inability to read aloud easily, continued difficulty with speech
- always getting lost
- difficulty in telling the time
- lack of skill in sports
- difficulty telling left from right

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[2]Scott, Anna McNair. ***Dyslexia Your First Questions Answered*** The British Dyslexia Assocaiton. Reading. 1995. p. 3.

- inattention
- lack of reading comprehension
- inability to finish work in a given time
- lack of organization at home and at school
- difficulty in copying from the blackboard or a text book
- difficulty remembering or writing down oral instructions

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the possible manifestations of dyslexia or ADD/HD, but it should give some idea of what you might expect.

FACTORS THAT MIGHT COMPLICATE RECOGNITION

Learning differently students look just like any other students, for this reason you can sometimes hear their problem referred to as a "hidden disability." And because it is hidden, it often goes undiagnosed.

1. Sometimes the symptoms of both dyslexia and ADD/HD are just a part of the maturation process and are something that children will naturally outgrow as they become older. But if the symptoms persist, if you and/or your child are feeling uneasy for any length of time, you should consider getting an assessment done. Sometimes well-meaning teachers will attempt to reassure you that there really isn't a problem, it's just a case of growing up. Other teachers might give you the feeling that you are over-reacting and are an overanxious parent. But you know your children best. You know when they are thriving or not. Follow your instinct.

2. It could be possible that one or both parents might not recognize or deny that there is any problem. There is clear evidence that both dyslexia and ADD/HD tend to run in families. Therefore, it could be quite natural for the parents not to think that there is any problem because the child is acting and/or developing in more or less the same way that they did.

One FAWCO mother recounts:

> He was the brightest kid in the class and kept discussions going but his daily work was incomplete and messy and we were told that he wasn't working up to potential. This worried my husband, who'd always heard the same, but was sure that his very dysfunctional family was to blame . . .
> Then my best friend came to visit. She's a student councilor at our old high school, specializes in learning disabilities and has ADD - it runs in her family. She spotted it right away; that kid's ADD. We talked a lot about it, also with our husbands. Hers knew about his ADD, for mine it was a revelation.

Sometimes problems arise in families when one parent thinks or recognizes that there is a problem, and the other parent can't see it. It is not unknown that it is the students themselves who recognized that they have problem. One of their hardest tasks can be to convince their parents.

3. Another factor that might prohibit early recognition is the often superior intelligence of the student. Often many of our learning differently students are able to cope in elementary school, only to find that the different teaching methods and different requirements of the last six grades do not permit them to succeed. Because they were successful before, very often parents and

teachers begin to label the student lazy or inattentive, epitaphs that are counter-productive to say the least.

4. Problems are sometimes blamed on the fact that the student is living overseas or is a member of a dual-cultural family. Therefore, learning difficulties are sometimes seen as being cause by:

- adjustment to moving away from friends and extended family
- the shock of adjusting to a new culture
- the possible necessity of having to learn a new language
- the fact that the child is being brought up bilingually

The following is from a first person account of a FAWCO mother:

> When my son began to read in the host country language, I was concerned by his reluctance to read and his difficulties parsing words when he did read. New to the country and unable to speak much of the host country language myself, I wasn't exactly sure how to proceed within the school system. My son was suffering from hearing difficulties, culture shock and reading difficulties in Kindergarten and also in the first and second grades. My husband attributed his inability to read well to the foreign language and to our son's hearing loss. As I had studied some linguistics and am a language teacher by training, I felt the problem was dyslexia.

Subsequent assessment found this to be the case, and eventually the child did receive special help.

WHY DO STUDENTS LEARN DIFFERENTLY?

Students learn differently for a variety of reasons that are still under investigation. But scientific evidence has already made one thing quite clear. What are now being termed "specific learning difficulties" are not just middle class excuses for underachievement, as some have been so unkind as to suggest. Nor are they the result of the fact that the student is lazy, dumb, dull, inattentive or stupid.

More and more evidence is coming to light which indicates that differences in perception might be at the root cause of many of these problems. For example, in an article for the ***International Herald Tribune*** entitled, "'Glasses for the Ears' of Dyslexics," Sandra Blakeslee writes:

> Scientists have developed a radically different treatment for children with severe language and reading difficulties, one that may have applications for millions of children with dyslexia.
>
> They call it "glasses for the ears."
>
> The treatment uses a special form of computer-generated speech in a therapeutic program that is designed to force changes in auditory portions in the children's brains - altering cells that process simple sounds. Just as glasses correct faulty vision, these changes in the auditory cortex sharply improve the children's ability to perceive spoken sounds and to decode written words.
>
> Recent experiments show that after just four weeks of treatment, language-disabled children advanced two full years in their verbal comprehension skills, researches say. They said the improvements endured

after training had stopped. In effect, the children could throw their "glasses" away.

The two scientists spearheading the research, Dr. Paula Tallal of Rutgers University in Newark and Dr. Michael Merzenich of the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco, said in interviews that they believed the treatment would help many children and adults with minor forms of language and reading disability - the condition widely known as dyslexia.[3]

Other research indicates that the lack of certain neurological chemicals in the brain might be responsible for some behavioral control problems. Indeed, the use of drugs like Ritalin for the treatment of some cases of ADD/HD seems to be a great help and provide welcome relief for many students. The use of inhibition and stimulant medications has been likened to the use of insulin for the diabetic. They don't remove the problem, but their use permits the individual to lead a pretty normal life.

British developmental therapist, Stephen Clarke, has come up with a different technique for dealing with what he calls "developmental learning difficulties:"

Since the age of seven, Richard Griffith, now 15, has suffered from a litany of problems. He was diagnosed as profoundly dyslexic (unable to read or write), dyspraxic (so clumsy and uncoordinated that he couldn't kick a ball or run properly) and hyperactive. Seven years of special education schools had done little for him, but last November, Richard started a new treatment, and his progress began to improve dramatically.

The therapy involves no drugs, no psychotherapy, no teaching. It is mechanical, repetitive and it is performed with a small paint brush. Everyday his parents spent 20 minutes stroking the brush along the base of his fingers. During a second month, it was brushed down from the base of his nose, around his mouth to this chin, and then across the top of his lip.

His sports master was the first to comment: "What have you done to the boy?" he asked Richard's father, Colin. "He can suddenly play football - he's so good, I'm considering him for the team."

Within another month, the tantrums had stopped and Richard was beginning to read and write . . .

Richard attended a clinic run by Stephen Clarke, a developmental therapist who originally trained as an aerospace engineer. His "paintbrush" technique is based on the theory that learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, and related problems such as dyspraxia and hyperactivity, are caused by the presence of immature neurological reflexes.[4]

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[3]Blakeslee, Sandra. *New York Times Service*. ***International Herald Tribune***. Section Health/Science. "'Glasses for the Ears' of Dyslexics." Thursday, November 16, 1995. p. 12.

[4]Edwards, Tony. ***Telegraph Magazine***. Section Healthfront. "Dyslexia." p. 58. Stephen Clarke can be reached at the Centre for Developmental Learning Difficulties, 9 Portland Business Center, Manor House Lane, Datchet, Slough, Berkshire SL3 9EG, England.

A mother describes her son's examination for visual problems:

> Alexander was wired up to strange machines and every aspect of his vision was monitored: the results were a revelation. Apart from being, as we knew, myopic, his main visual problem became obvious on recording his eye movements with infra red recorders to foveal targets. He was found to have great difficulty in keeping his eyes quite still and in making accurate saccadic and pursuit movement. Mrs. Fowler thought that this difficulty with his eyes may well have caused letters to move about and mirror-reverse.[5]

There is a great deal of information that indicates that learning differently tends to run in families, and some researchers think they have found the gene for dyslexia.

Whatever the cause, the fact remains that dyslexia and ADD/HD are not attitude problems, but the result of physical differences, and as such are beyond the control of the individual. Nor as such can they be outgrown. Sometimes this might appear to be the case because, as they develop, the students learn coping techniques which improve their performances. But as of today, there is no "cure." There are, however, many effective treatments and teaching techniques that can enable these students to learn successfully.

CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING THE FACT THAT STUDENTS LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Lack of success in recognizing that there is a problem can lead to:

⇒ frustration, which could lead to behavioral problems
⇒ lack of self-confidence
⇒ low self-esteem
⇒ fear of isolation, of being different
⇒ bullying by peers
⇒ inappropriate demands by parents and school personal resulting in ridicule of the student
⇒ engaging in inappropriate or harmful activities to compensate for lack of success in school, at home and eventually in life

As has been previously stated, it is now thought that upwards of **15% of the population** learn differently to a significant degree. But this percentage is not reflected in prison populations or in the populations of substance abusers. Excepts from the following article by Seth Linder reveal some troubling statistics:

> For 12 years, Andrew, a heroin-user now in his thirties, was in and out of prison for drug-related offences. Desperate to break the cycle, he tried to enroll for a literacy course. He was lucky - a perceptive tutor suspected he was dyslexic. Four years later, having received specialist tuition, Andrew is now a drugs counselor and a part-time college student.

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[5]Faludy, Tanya & Faludy, Alexander. ***A Little Edge of Darkness: a Boy's Triumph Over Dyslexia*** Jessica Kingsley Publisher. London, Bristol, Pennsylvania. 1996. p. 67

Recent research in the US found that **52 % of a sample of prisoners were dyslexic***, findings that have been mirrored in other countries.

Wally Morgan, a probation officer and one of the originators of the Dyspel Project, a pilot scheme to identify and assist dyslexic offenders, tells that the most moving moment is when an offender discovers the reason for his learning difficulties. "I've seen tough, macho men in their forties, armed robbers, drug users, shoplifters, burst into tears of relief. 'All my life I've been told I'm thick, lazy, ignorant, and I've known I'm not,' is a typical response. This is the first step in recovery from this kind of life."

Morgan has also screened residents at a **drugs and alcohol rehabilitation center where he found an astonishing 91% to be dyslexic***. The resulting feeling of inadequacy and rejection is, he feels, the underlying cause of their addictions.

"If we can give dyslexia a much higher profile, if judges and lawyers, prison officials and teachers can acquire a better understanding of it, if people would realize that dyslexia in not an excuse but a reason, we would quickly see a significant reduction in offending."[6]

Think of the savings if we could cut the prison population in half. Think of the additional savings if we could help prevent drug addiction and alcoholism. And think how these savings would not only be financial.

WHO CAN IMPROVE THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS?

We can. We are the ones who have to change the system. We are the ones who need to vote to spend the money and fund the programs. And in doing so, you will not only be saving the self-respect of individuals and providing them with an opportunity to succeed, you will also be saving yourself a lot of tax money down the line.

YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY!

It's more than time for learning differently students to come out of the closet. Speaking of dyslexia and ADD/HD in hushed tones or behind closed doors only adds to the sense that these conditions are so terrible that they shouldn't be spoken of out loud or in public.

What do Albert Einstein, Cher, and Walt Disney have in common? They are all learning differently students who happened to become famous people. A whole list of them can be found in Attachment #2 thanks to the One A. D. D. Website (see *Bibliography and Resource Materials*). One of the first things we need to do to help our learning differently students successfully negotiate the mainstream is to raise their level of self-esteem. Let them know that not only are they not alone, they are among some pretty good company.

---

*the bolding and underlying are mine. SvA

*Ibid.

[6]Linder, Seth. "Teaching dyslexic prisoners to fight crime." ***The Independent***. September 18, 1996. p. 22.

IF YOU THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE A STUDENT WHO LEARNS DIFFERENTLY

1. Read up on the problem. **Inform yourself**. The bibliography and resource list at the end of this study can be a starting place.

2. **Don't be put off** with the often well-meant assurances that while your child might be a bit behind now, he will soon catch-up. You know your child best. One FAWCO mother writes, "If you suspect your child has SLD (specific learning difficulties), be persistent in getting the assessment. Don't be fobbed off with 'It's developmental, be patient.' It's crucial to identify and get recognition early on before the child's confidence is affected."

3. If you think that extra help might be needed, get **an assessment** or testing done right away. Demand it if you must. **You have to become an advocate for your child**. The following excerpt from a book written by a 12 year old dyslexic boy, Alexander Faludy, and his mother, Tanya Faludy, describes their relief once they had received the results of the assessment:

> The journey home was in marked contrast to the one there. Our son with the illegible writing and bizarre spelling was both dyslexic and one of the cleverest people in the country. Alexander was buoyant as he chatted about his interesting conversation with Mr. Freland. He was liberated from the labels of slow, backward, stupid, and the basis of a new aspect of his character was formed: an independence from relying on the conventional judgements of others and an awareness that his individuality had a unique quality which was outside standard measurements. That morning he ceased to mind being different and gained a new strength in the belief of his personal worth.[7]

Alexander was very fortunate. Both his parents were college lecturers, and both realized when Alexander was quite young that they were raising an exceptionally gifted child. So when his school performance did not match the intelligence they knew he possessed, they were knowledgeable enough to have him tested at the earliest possible age. Ennis Cosby, the son of the famous TV dad, Bill Cosby, wasn't so easily recognized as having a problem. ***Time*** magazine gives the following account:

> His father remembers watching in frustration as his son studied and studied but got nowhere with his grades. Ennis managed to enter Morehouse College in Atlanta, but he continued to struggle with his schoolwork. His mother, Camille, told ***Jet*** magazine in 1992, "We didn't know that Ennis was dyslexic until he went to college."
>
> "He never used it as an excuse," say his friend and schoolmate, Clarence Anthony Jasper II. Though midway through college before the learning disability was discovered, Ennis enrolled in a short program that quickly prepared him to deal with his dyslexia and to fully master reading. . . In a paper he wrote, Ennis said, **"The happiest day of my life occurred when I found out I was dyslexic. I believe that life is finding solutions, and the worst feeling to me is confusion."***[8]

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[7]Faludy & Faludy. p. 39.

*the bolding and underlying are mine, SvA

[8]Chua-Eoan, Howard, et al. "He was My Hero." ***Time***. January 27, 1997. p. 25.

Ennis was planning on attending graduate school in order to become a teacher for students who learn differently when his life was so tragically cut short.

THE ASSESSMENT

The earlier remedial help is given the better. In some places, this might be offered free of charge, but waiting lists can be long. It might be better to have it done privately, even if you have to pay. In some cases it appears that the authorities are reluctant to assess children because of the financial burden that will be placed upon them if the child is found to require special help.

It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the many assessment possibilities. Some are done in the school. Others involve a visit to a specialist. Some take much longer than others. Some tests measure intelligence, some measure performance and others measure physical perception. Work is ongoing in the development of new testing procedures and in the refinement of existing ones. Currently work is being done on the development of an international test for dyslexia. If you might be interested in this project, see Ian Symthe under *Websites*.

In some countries, proper testing might not be available, in which case you might consider having it done when you are on home leave.

If you don't agree with the assessment, consider getting another one done somewhere else. Recently there was a case in Antwerp in the Flemish school system where the mother was pretty sure that her daughter had a problem. Over a period of 5 years, she requested four different assessments . The last one finally confirmed that the child was dyslexic.

In an other instance, a FAWCO mother did not agree with the assessment of her child that the new school insisted on doing. She suggests that when you know beforehand that you child has a problem, come to the new school with a brand new, up-to-date evaluation from your home country that you feel does correctly reflect the situation. Then based on this and in order to prevent any future misunderstanding , request the new school to give assurances in writing that the suggested remedial treatment will be followed.

The assessment is very important. Only then can you proceed with obtaining the **correct help** for your student. It is also of great importance in some countries, because only then can you get **financial compensation** for any special help that might be needed. Very often when you move, even between towns, the new school system will require that a new assessment be done.

IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT YOUR STUDENT DOES LEARN DIFFERENTLY

1. **Empower yourself and your student**. As soon as you think the student is old enough, involve him, help him to take active part in any decisions that are made regarding his education. For example, discuss enrolling him as soon as is practical in a typing course so he can take full advantage of computer technology.

2. Find out everything you can. **Join a support group**, and if there isn't one, create one. Suggestions are given in the section "Support Groups."

3. **Be prepared for trial and error**. Just as dyslexia has no one or simple definition, there is no one remedy that will solve all the problems. But if you and your child know this up front, disappointments can be avoided.

4. Because of your interest, you will often be on the cutting edge of the **newest ideas and the latest methods**. Ask friends to send you articles and let you know about programs they have seen that relate to your topic.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTERNATIONALLY MOBILE FAMILIES

Before the Move

European Children in Crisis, a Brussels-based support group, offers the following advice in their extremely excellent booklet, ***Children with Specific Learning Difficulties*** (see inserts):

> Families who have not yet moved would be well-advised to carefully consider in advance, in consultation with professionals and other members of the family, if it is better to:
>
> * move and integrate the child into the local education system. (Likely to involve having to learn a new language);
> * move and find a private school where special education is available in the mother tongue. (Likely to be expensive);
> * move and put together what assistance they can find;
> * reconsider the need to move at all.

Four Pages of Questions:

Many international companies offer a "look-see" visit prior to accepting a post overseas, and this offers an ideal time to investigate the various educational options. The last section of the European Children in Crisis booklet offers an invaluable, four page check list to use when you interview at schools. Be sure to bring a copy with you so you remember what questions to ask. It will also provide you with a record of your interview.

After the Move

Comments from a FAWCO mother: "At the time that we moved, we did not realize the extent of his learning disability (his first and second grade teachers in the U.S. thought that he was merely a 'late bloomer'). His third grade teacher at the international school was entirely untrained in the area of learning disabilities, and was utterly unwilling to accommodate his different style of learning in her classroom. It was a disastrous year."

The European Children in Crisis support group reminds us that, "Whatever the variants, for the English-speaking expatriate family, two hard facts remain:

> i) the range of provisions - schooling, therapists and back-up in English - is likely to be less than that at home, and

ii) the cost of paying for education provision, in a setting where English in not the mother-tongue, is almost always much higher.

The good news is that most learning differently students can be successfully mainstreamed. But you will need to work closely with the school, keeping in mind that some of the people you might be dealing with might not be as knowledgeable as you have become on the subject. Together you, the student, if able, and the school should consider options and plot strategies. Some suggestions are offered in the section, "At School."

Good Suggestions Anytime

No matter when you discover that your student learns differently, the edition of the ***Expatriate Observer*** newsletter entitled, "Considerations in Moving Your Special-Needs Child Abroad," published by Organization Resources Counselors, Inc., offers the following advice:

1. At a minimum, educate yourself about your particular child's diagnosis and needs in order to advocate for and educate others about what services are indicated.
2. Volunteer at your child's school. Both teachers and administrators are often more supportive of a parent who is involved with their school.
3. Maintain your relationship with the national support organization for your child's disability. Subscribe to any publications available from these organizations so you can keep up with what is happening in the field and prepare for your return home.
4. Arrange to return home periodically for testing and evaluation of your child.[9]

This same edition offers a list of selected independent international schools offering services for special-needs children.

AT HOME

A lot of us don't like too many surprises, but learning differently students tend to especially not like them. Many of their difficulties stem from a poor concept of time, and therefore, especially when they are young, they frequently need a lot of help structuring their activities. When anticipated activities have to be changed or postponed, confusion and resentment can arise. You can help by taking the **time to carefully explain** the reason for the change and what the new program will be. Time is, after all, the coin we need to spend on all children.

Because many learning differently students have poor sequencing skills (e.g. remembering the days of the week, the alphabet, multiplication tables), they frequently forget to carry out instructions or be able to find their way when someone gives them directions. Therefore, when the child is young:

1. Make sure you have the child's attention.
2. Give the instruction clearly.
3. Give only one instruction at a time.

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[9]Eakin, Kay B. "Considerations in Moving Your Special-Needs Child Abroad." ***Expatriate Observer***. Winter 1996. Organization Resources Counselors, Inc. 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. p. 8.

4. Have the child repeat the instruction in his own voice.
5. Give immediate praise when the task is successfully completed.

When new activities are to be undertaken, Richard Lavoie of the Eagle Hill School in Greenwich, CT, gives the following advice:

> When a child is entering a new situation (e.g. joining the boy scouts, enrolling for religious instruction), the parent has two jobs to do:
> 1. preparing the ***child*** for the ***situation*** (e.g. discuss, role play, etc.) and
> 2. preparing the ***situation*** for the ***child*** (if appropriate, discuss the child's needs and limitations with the coach, teacher, or adult leader).[10]

The British Dyslexia Association reminds us to:

> **BE PATIENT**. Remember that a dyslexic child is likely to take longer to learn to do such things as tie shoe laces, tell the time, distinguish left from right, remember instructions, etc. Make time to help and be prepared to repeat this help. See that the child has everything necessary and a distraction-free place for homework. Make sure that he/she understands what has to be done.
> **BE POSITIVE**. Establish a routine and ask for the school timetable so you can help with organization. Read aloud as much as you can. Don't make comparisons with others in the family or at school, and don't allow others to tease him/her about difficulties. Story books can be put on tape, and some may already be available. Build on strengths and skills. Praise success and perseverance. Encourage the use of the computer - many dyslexic children are particularly good at this.
> **BE AWARE**. Watch out for signs of stress and frustration. Talk to the teacher about particular difficulties with homework, and ask for suggestions as to how you can help. Remember that self-organization is especially hard for dyslexic people, and devise ways of making this easier. Remember that the dyslexic child has to make a greater effort than others and is likely to be unusually tired at the end of the school day so avoid pressures at home. Don't allow dyslexia to become an excuse for not trying, but understand that unusual difficulties demand unusual effort.
> **BE PERSEVERING**. Even when your child is having special help, the difficulties will not disappear miraculously, and there are likely to be very bad days. Develop good relationships with teachers, and don't expect information to be passed on from teacher to teacher or school to school automatically; make sure that it is. Never give up, your continuing support and understanding are vital if your child is to have the confidence to compensate for weaknesses and develop strengths.[11]

For parents who would like to know more about how to help their children with their homework, H. Alan Sayles, of the Irish support group, Association for Children and Adults

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[10]Lavoie, Richard. ***How Difficult Can This Be?*** Worksheet for the video. Rosen Productions. distributed by PBS VIDEO and WETA, Washington, DC. 1989.

[11]Scott, Anna McNair. p. 6.

with Learning Disabilities, has written a guide entitled, "Advice For Parents," which can be found as Attachment #3.

For the older child, some modern technology can prove a great help:

- the use of computers which is discussed below
- a digital watch with a date facility and a programmable alarm to help keep appointments -
- the use tape recorder as a memory supplement not only for lectures, but also for interviews to help remember was said or asked, and also when there is a need to ask directions
- calculators for math
- books on tape with a personal Walkman hi-fi so the student can be "reading" anywhere (on the bus, at the bus stop, in the street, at home); often libraries for the blind will lend books on tape to dyslexics

Richard Lavoie reminds us to:

> Remember that the child is more normal than different. Emphasize strengths and abilities.

> Never forget that the LD child needs what all children need: love, acceptance, protection, discipline, and the freedom to grow and learn.[12]

AT SCHOOL

There can be great deal of heartbreak, anger and frustration when it appears that nothing or little is being done at a school to help the student who learns differently. There are even people who suggest that these students do not suffer from a learning disability but rather from a teaching disability. "I never let my schooling interfere with my education," as Mark Twain was famed to say.

But let us be fair. Recognition of the problem and knowledge of effective teaching methods are still far from universal. Many teachers today have had no training on how to recognize, let alone help, learning differently students. The 1955 edition of Random House's ***The American College Dictionary*** doesn't even contain the word, "dyslexia."

A teacher's job doesn't stop at three in the afternoon. There can be special help after school or parent-teacher conferences. There are still hours of correcting and preparation ahead. You have one child that you are concerned about. They often have a 100 or more each day. And we really can't blame them if they weren't taught to teach in a multisensory manner or to recognize students who learn differently. So when you have a conference with a teacher, please take their situation into consideration also. Ideally you should become a team.

Most teachers are sincerely committed to their profession, and most are willing to try new ways of getting their message across. As Michael Thomson and Bill Watkins, co-principals of the East Court School for Dyslexic Children, suggest, "Written large in every teacher's text book should be "THERE ARE MANY ROUTES TO THE SAME OBJECTIVE."[13]

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[12]Lavoie, Richard.

[13]Thomson & Watkins. ***Dyslexia A Teaching Handbook***. Athenaeum Press Ltd. Newcastle upon Tyne, England. p. 44.

The International Schools

Many parents and teachers living overseas are involved with international schools. These schools are not run like the public ones back home, nor are they run like the national schools of the host country.

International schools are private institutions, and like private schools in other countries, they do not have to make allowances for learning differently students. One FAWCO researcher who investigated two international schools in her area reported, "Both schools were very helpful and said each child would be evaluated on an individual basis, and if they didn't feel that the very best could be provided, they would decline to take the student." Another school policy states that they ". . . will not accept students who, because of cognitive or physical disabilities require special education classes or services."

However, in some locations, international schools are the only option for the relocating family, and as one questionnaire reports, "Parents find themselves totally alone, in many cases in fear of loosing their jobs because there are no facilities for any type of learning problem."

On the other hand, large, international hubs like Athens and Brussels do offer many possible English-speaking schools from which to choose.

This does not mean to say that most international schools make no provision for special needs. In fact according to the response to the questionnaire, 13 out of 16 of the clubs who answered this question said that their international school did provide some sort of special help.

Of special note is the program available at the Casablanca American School:

> The PACE (Program for Ability Centered Education) Department consists at present of one reading specialist and one learning disabilities specialist.
> Students who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities are scheduled (in lieu of French) for approximately 3 1/2 hours of support per week with a PACE teacher. The student is mainstreamed for all other classes.
> Students with learning disabilities are also followed by a Child Study Team which is composed of PACE specialists, faculty members, and administrators. The CST works with teachers to closely monitor the progress of the students and make recommendations concerning intervention measures.

Host Country or National Schools

For the most part, public schools, wherever you find them, recognize some responsibility for making provision for students who learn different. These provisions range from superior ones that can be found in countries like Great Britain where children have the legal right to be taught in a way appropriate to their learning styles, to countries where special needs programs are just being established.

Except in Great Britain and Ireland, there were no specialized English-speaking boarding schools for learning differently students. Most host countries, however, offer such possibilities in their native language and at no additional charge to the family for the tuition. However, costs like transportation and room and board might not be covered. But these school are

usually only for severe cases, and once a student is admitted it can be difficult to get him back into the mainstream schools.

Sometimes the school system won't pay for help until the child is a certain age. Sometimes there is a time limit set for free help after which the family must pay.

Most host countries do not require that the student attend school in one particular school district. This can be to the great advantage of the learning differently student as one nearby school might offer much more help than another. One FAWCO researcher recounts experiences with host country schools, "I have heard stories in our club of children who have been treated as 'stupid' and made to do all the normal schoolwork with no extra help, and I have heard parents tell of children who have been given the very best of extra help with their learning disability."

Many host country schools follow the Greek example in their approach to the education of children with special education needs:

> The Ministry's educational policy and philosophy concerning the education of children and youth with special needs is clearly integration oriented . . .
> The majority of these children attend ordinary schools. In fact we want them to stay there not only by chance or because of the law, which demands compulsory education, but being also involved part-time in special education programs, individually or in small homogeneous groups, according to their needs and their abilities and in the frame of the whole school function . . .
> We believe that this educational policy coincides with the contemporary philosophy of school and social integration of the people and especially the children with special needs, without any kind of segregation or labeling.[14]

International and Host Country Schools

One club in a developing country reported no international schools and no special help yet in the national school system due to financial limitations. In a case like this, children with special needs either had to be home-schooled or returned to the States for schooling.

It was felt that in most all schools, whether public or international, the staff was accessible and arranging a conference was easily done. Unfortunately, such conferences did not always result in the improvement of the child's situation.

The manner in which either system provided special provision ranged from regular classroom teachers attempting to tailor their teaching to the learning style of the student to highly-trained, specialized learning resource personnel.

For the most part, there was no additional charge in either the public or the private schools for any special help that was available on site. However, often this help was found to be inadequate and families found themselves in the position of having to pay for additional remedial treatment and/or assessment.

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[14]Bulletin of the Ministry of Education of Greece. pp. 262-263.

Some schools do not have referral systems, and the parents must not only pay for special help, they must also find it on their own.

The most often repeated kind of advice given by FAWCO responders regarding coping tactics was that "one must be strong-minded, persistent and very direct."

Elementary School:

As has been noted, may learning differently students are not recognized until they leave their first six years of formal school because elementary school teachers are usually taught to teach in a multisensory and repetitive manner and this is the approach to which learning differently students respond best. The students see, hear and do more or less simultaneously. The teacher writes "cat" on the blackboard. As it is being written, the teacher says the letters and the word. The students then repeat the letters and the word a few times. Then they copy the word on their paper. Perhaps the teacher will show a colored picture of a cat, or maybe even a cat will be brought into the classroom and the sense of touch might be employed. As many as possible of the student's senses are used, and over learning, or repetition, is employed.

Middle, High School and College:

There is a vast difference between teaching techniques in the elementary school and those employed in higher education. Now students are often expected to learn via one sense only, as when they must take notes from a lecture. They are expected to organize their own time and find their own way.

Techniques for Teachers and Administrators

There are many techniques that can be used, some at all levels, to help the learning differently student in the classroom. Some of these are listed below. Many others can be found in the material suggested at the end of this study.

- if you suspect one of your students might have a problem, check with the administration to see if the student has ever been assessed; likewise the administration should see that each teacher concerned is notified of any special needs
- sit the student at the front of the class so there are less distractions
- match the student to the teacher whenever there is a choice; we learn better from people we like, and we probably like them because they are teaching in a manner we can learn from
- exemption from taking more than one language; while other students are studying a second language, the learning differently student can be receiving specialized help
- in so far as possible, make your presentations multisensory in nature; this will be a great help for your students who learn differently and will not harm the performance of the other students
- more time for exams
- oral instead of written exams
- have the exam questions available on tape so the student can listen to them on a Walkman recorder while also being able to see them
- use of computers with grammar and spell check to take exams
- use of tape recorders for lectures
- calculators for math
- have lecture notes photocopied either by the teacher or a friend who takes good notes
- lap-top computers to take lecture notes

- assistance from an "amanuensis" or scribe (a person who reads the questions and writes down the dictated answer)
- stress strengths over weaknesses
- be very positive when correcting work; an exercise that is returned covered in red marks is most disheartening
- work together with the parents so homework requirements are realistic and clearly understood
- don't make the child read aloud in class unless he is comfortable doing so
- permit the use of spelling dictionaries and/or hand-held, electronic spell-checkers
- educate all the students about what learning differently means; in so learning, they will not only learn why some of their classmates get special dispensations, they will also learn more about themselves, some schools offer "Theory of Knowledge" courses with might be a good place to start, or perhaps a special section in the Biology course could deal with differences in perception

It should be remembered that not all these interventions are appropriate for all students.

This is, by no means, a complete list. A paper prepared by Marion & Julia Welchman and submitted by the AWC of Edinburgh gives more suggestions for teachers and can be found as Attachment #4. Also recommended is the teacher checklist that can be found on pages 51-53 of ***Dyslexia A Teaching Handbook*** by Thomson & Watkins (see *Bibliography and Resource Materials)*.

The Use of the Computer as a Teaching Aid

Practically daily new computer programs are coming on the market designed to help the student who learns differently. Some are for home use (see GAMZ insert) and others are to be used at school with the supervision of a tutor. The British Dyslexia Association has a computer subcommittee on the use of computers with dyslexics which puts out a bulletin with reviews of the latest software from the point of view of teachers of dyslexics.

Thomson & Watkins remind us in ***Dyslexia: A Teaching Handbook*** that, "What is important is for software, and teaching programs, to be based on sound educational principles. In the case of the dyslexic, this means based on teaching procedures that are used to overcome the dyslexic's difficulties. For example, overlearning and over teaching, structured and systematic teaching, immediate reinforcement and feedback, and multisensory learning." Those that are in the business of developing these types of programs would do well to ask the help of the students themselves.

Many learning differently students respond well to **working and learning with computers** because:

- there is an instant response that can correct or reinforce the right answer so that the right connections get made in the brain; the repetition (or overlearning) is continued until the correct response is learned
- the learning is student-led; the student works at his own speed
- the student competes against himself rather than others
- a computer is non-judgmental
- it is predictable, learning differently students don't like surprises

- computers by their nature are sequential and logical and this helps to reinforce these skills in the user
- computers can be used in any class:
  - to correct grammar and spelling errors in any written work, such as note taking and exams
  - to correct deficiencies in handwriting

In some countries if the student is properly assessed, they can get grants to help defray the purchase of this equipment, or they might have the equipment loaned to them.

Continuing Education for Teachers

Any teachers who would like to continue or begin specialized training in how to teach children who learn differently via distance learning are advised to contact The Hornsby International Center, Correspondence Course Division (see *Useful Addresses*).

Tips for College-Bound Students

The following information comes from the school newsletter of AIS in Vienna in June of 1997:

> Colleges may request complete psycho-educational evaluations for learning disabled students to help them determine admission as well as qualifying the student for special services or allowances once admission is granted. In any case, it is helpful for high school students to be assessed if any difficulty is suspected because they might qualify for special considerations, like extra time, when taking the SAT, AP and IB exams.

The college guide, ***How to Get Into the College of Your Choice . . . and How to Finance It*** (see *Bibliography and Resource Materials)*, provides a whole chapter entitled "Some Tactics for Those with Learning Disabilities." They advise that you keep the college of your choice fully informed about your learning differently problems. A sample letter is provided to be submitted along with the application to the college admission office describing any difficulties, and also a sample letter to send after the student has been accepted requesting any special considerations.

SUPPORT GROUPS

If there is no support group in your area, you might want to start one. In order to find members, ask friends and school personnel to announce your plans to people who might be interested. You might place ads in the school and area newspapers. Perhaps even a local radio or TV station would help out.

The following inserts have been included as examples for new and established groups:

1. The European Children in Crisis booklet, ***Children with Specific Learning Difficulties*** (insert), is an excellent example of the information that might be contained in an **area guide**.

2. The ASChiLD (Association Supporting Children who Learn Differently) in Antwerp provides a copy of their **articles of agreement** (Attachment #5), a must to have if you are planning on becoming a legal entity. Check your host country for specific requirements. Even

if you do not apply for legal status, articles of agreement, constitution, bylaws, or whatever you choose to call them, give your organization structure and status.

3. Care-Hellas and ASChiLD supply a copy of their **brochures** (inserts).

4. Some of the larger groups are able to put out a **newsletter** (insert). An example is included from Dyspel in Luxembourg.

5. Parents United in The Netherlands provides a description of a **PTA-based** support group (Attachment #6).

6. Dyspel's chart indicates the **types of activities** that support groups engage in (Attachment #7).

Other Activities:

Lobbying: Some support groups keep check of pending legislation in their host country. Sometimes members are asked to or volunteer to testify before ministers or legislative committees when laws concerning education are up for discussion. Support groups also lobby schools and teachers in an attempt to bring about greater understanding and more facilities for the learning differently student.

Adult Education: The Association for Children & Adults with Learning Difficulties, a host-country based support group in Ireland, notes that they have been given a grant from the E.U. under the Horizon Program to run a course in information technology for adults with dyslexia who want to get into employment or become self-employed.

For the Students Themselves:

Children learn well from each other, and support groups for children themselves could lead to an exchange of coping techniques and strategies.

FREYA'S STORY

In keeping with the spirit that learning differently is nothing to be ashamed about, the author of this study and her daughter would like to share some of their experiences with you, in the hopes that others will take heart and persevere.

Freya's Mom's Story:

I attended graduate school in a Masters of English program. At the completion of the one and a half year program, successful candidates would be awarded a Master of Arts degree in English and permanent high school teaching certification. There were many graduate-level English courses in my curriculum, but there was only one education class. And that class, if memory serves me, consisted of little more than how to create a lesson plan.

Part of my program also consisted of teaching one semester as a full-time teacher. I was assigned to teach 7th and 8th grade English, 5 classes a day, from January to June, up to and including preparing the final exam and determining who would pass and who would fail. I had never even stood in front of a class for the purpose of giving a lesson before I started my teaching segment.

I successfully completed all my work for my Masters' Degree, except that I did not write my thesis. I had a committee set up and a topic and an outline approved. All I had to do was write one more paper. I had written many others previously. But every time I would try to enter the library to work on my paper, I became physically ill. There was no apparent physical reason for such a reaction.

So I left graduate school at the end of that summer, minus thesis and minus degree. And without too many regrets, because I realized that I had not been very happy when I was teaching. This was due in large part to the fact that my 7th and 8th graders were constantly finding spelling errors whenever I had to write on the board. I remember one child raising his hand to say, "Miss, you misspelled 'February,' again."

I had never heard of or been taught about dyslexia, and I had no idea why many of my students, none of whom were expected to go on to college, could spell and I could not. Or why so many of my students, who seemed very bright, were in the slow class.

I now think that a major reason that I was unable to write my thesis was because I was overwhelmed by the thought of having to look up all those words in the dictionary, again.

Freya's Story:

Freya's story is revealed in the following letter that I sent to her former school a year after that school dictated that she would have to repeat her Junior year of high school.

Dear Director and Faculty of Sint-Ludgardisschool,

First I would like you to know that I feel that Freya received a great deal of time and attention during her stay at your school and that most of the adults she came in contact with were persons sincerely committed to their professions.

However, I feel that a great deal more could have been done, and as I have learned more about students who learn differently and how to teach them, I would like to share some of my observations with you.

Because of Freya's problem with dyslexia, I frequently offered a book on this subject to many of her language teachers. The title of the book is, *This Book Doesn't Make Sens Cens Sns Seens Sense (Living and Learning with Dyslexia)*, written by the Educational Director of the British Dyslexia Association, Jean Augur. Unfortunately, I was not perceptive enough at the time to realize that, in addition to Freya's language teachers, I should have also offered the book to Freya's math teacher.

Freya decided to remove herself from your school when she learned that she would not be passed on to her Senior year, primarily because she could not bear the heartbreak of seeing her classmates graduate without her. Despite the fact that she was tutored privately every Monday for the whole summer, she was not able to pass your re-exam in math. This fact came as a tremendous shock to all of us, especially as her tutor, who himself is a teacher of higher mathematics, told us that she should be able to pass. Luckily we were given some professional advice that informed us that Pius X was the most user-friendly school in the Antwerp area for students who learn differently.

And indeed this has proven to be so. Once Freya's files from your guidance office arrived at Pius X, constructive action was immediately taken. Enclosed please find a copy of the assessment that was sent to all of her teachers this year, so that everyone was aware of the areas where Freya had difficulties. They were also given suggestions on how they might help right from the beginning of the school term.

At the new school, I remembered to offer the book to her math teacher, too. Because of this, for the first time a student at Pius X was allowed to take an additional mathematics exam orally because of dyslexia. As you will note from the math teacher's enclosed comments, Freya's work on her written final exam was "insufficient." In other words, she failed again, in spite of having repeated the year. However, she earned an "A" in her extra, oral exam. Surely these grades, if nothing else, should prove that dyslexics aren't failures, but rather students who need special consideration in order to be able to demonstrate what they do know.

I have heard some people argue that repeating a year or even two is not at all unusual in the Flemish school system, and that perhaps it is for the best - the child has a chance to mature. But I say that such mentality is misguided, and that an educational system that is set up to fail a large percentage of its students due to non-inclusive teaching methods is doing them and itself a great disservice. It is my understanding that studies have been done which indicate that making a student repeat a year is counterproductive to the learning process, and I heartily concur. What are you teaching, other than failure? How does Freya feel about this? "They have taken a year of my life."

Dyslexics, by definition, are of normal or above normal intelligence. But they learn differently than other students. Unfortunately, most of the current educational systems were created by persons who are not dyslexic and so the methods by which dyslexics are able to learn are not taught in most teacher training programs. And this I feel is a great waste. Most children want very much to succeed, to please their parents, their teachers and themselves. But when lessons are structured in such a manner as to make learning for the dyslexic extremely difficult, if not impossible, and if examinations are given in ways dyslexics cannot indicate just how much they really do know, unnecessary failures will continue to be the result, and more years will continue to be taken away from young lives.

If persons are not able to find success, achievement or fulfillment in one system, they will seek out other systems where they can succeed, or at least be made to feel good. After a while students get tired of hitting their heads against brick walls, and time, energy and talent will turn elsewhere, perhaps to illegal activities or substance abuse.

When I was a student and eventually a teacher in the United States, I was under the impression that when a student was failing, it could be as much a fault of the teacher as it was that of the student, given, of course, that the student was attempting to learn the material. It is this background, perhaps more than any other single aspect, that forces me to conclude that Freya's failure was your failure. And Freya's success could have been your success.

Thank you very much for your kind attention to this matter, and I hope that we will all be able to learn from Freya's achievement.

Sincerely yours,
Susan van Alsenoy

The Evaluation:
Concerning Freya van Alsenoy (born 16/10/1979)
Advice to the school in regards to her dyslexia problem:

Freya was tested for dyslexia on 12/19/91 and 2/5/96.

Freya is a student with a ***high intelligence***, with a striking difference of 22 points her between verbal and performance IQ. Freya was diagnosed as seriously *dyslexic*.

From a technical point of view, the difficulties are both with reading and spelling. Added to this, since the last school year, are difficulties with concentration for certain courses.
Reading:
Reading speed = too low
Reading techniques = Freya's reading behavior shows too many substantial faults (omitting, adding or changing words) and time consuming faults (repeating and correcting).
When Freya has the **time** to correct her work herself, it goes fairly well. In order to follow the regular speed in the classroom, Freya will sometimes "guess" while reading. It is not an imaginary danger that, because of this, Freya will store faulty information.
Spelling:
Faults concerning the basics:
- confusing short and long vowels
- diaeresis (accents on words that are a part of their spelling)
- diminutives
- past participles
- suffix "heid"

Confusing sentence construction
Insufficient automatization

The consequences of the above for school work are, among others:
- guesses reading of tasks and tests in order to finish in the set time
- errors in taking notes
- errors while reading the course contents (both printed notes and books, as well as her own notations)
- errors when reformulating the course contents (tasks and tests)

These errors are *not* due to lack of knowledge or understanding!
Oral tests are therefore more advisable for Freya rather than written ones.

Freya is a student that since the beginning of high school has done a lot of extra effort. We mention the following:
- school years 1991 through 1995: therapy sessions at "De Puzzel," center for children and adolescents with learning difficulties, for spelling Dutch and reading French
- study counseling at St. Lugardisschool
- study counseling this year at Pius X
- extra lessons in Dutch and math, during the 2nd and 3rd trimesters 1995-96, extra tutoring in mathematics during the summer vacation of 1996

Throughout the years, Freya has shown herself to be a hard-working student who will not avoid extra effort. She will find for herself a number of compensation mechanisms and succeeds to hold herself at the scholarly level. However, she is often very tense.
Her efforts were not always rewarded with good results at school report time. Because of this, Freya has often been discouraged, but nonetheless, each time she has started again with a positive attitude.

Freya is now doing her 5th (Junior) year over.
The good results on her Fall report card mean a good and well-deserved start for her.
To a large degree these good results are due to the "repeating" of the things learned last year.
Freya is a smart student. She will retain material that she has once understood.
Without extra help from the school, certainly in the case of studying new material, she will not get the results that she should get according to her possibilities and effort. There is a danger for a negative fear of failing.

In order that her school results should reflex the right picture, the following dispensations are strongly suggested:

- ✓ **Not to let language errors count** for those courses or parts of courses where the language is not the essential part of the content.
- ✓ **Allow extra time** for exams and tests for all courses.
- ✓ It is important that Freya has the time to understand the questions asked as well as possible. She has been taught at Puzzel to work in a self-correcting manner, but for this she needs more time than other students. As a result of her reading disability, Freya does not have normal reading automatisation.

Compositions (e.g. for Dutch) and other such written works, where spelling and sentence construction is taken into account, should be made on a PC. Freya can bring a portable PC to school. She can then hand in the disc, and the teacher can then print it out. When the students have to work at home on a project, Freya can, of course, do the printout herself.

Antwerpen, 19 November 1996

Lutgart Lathouwers, Learning Resource Leader
Rik Rosiers, Psychologist
Dr. Myriam De Leeuw, School Doctor

CONCLUSIONS AND PREDICTIONS

A Good Time

This is a good time to be a student who learns differently. There is a heightened public awareness both in and out of school of the nature of perceptual problems. Most public educational school systems have developed some sort of program to teach the learning differently student. The rest are following suit.

New physical testing methods, including genetic testing, plus new assessment procedures have been and are being developed to help in the early identification of students who learn differently.

Multisensory teaching techniques which make use of sight, sound, touch and color are being integrated into the mainstream teaching techniques at all levels.

Technology continues to make the demands of written communication easier both in the classroom and in the workplace. Voice-activated computers are already here. The internet provides access to the latest information on methods and strategies.

Visions of the Future

1. A time will come when all children will automatically be assessed before they enter elementary school. Then they can be helped right away, so that they need never hear words like "Pay attention! I know you can do it. You're just not trying hard enough." Or, "You're thick, you're dumb, you're lazy, you're stupid." Teachers won't have to say, "She's bright enough, follows along very well in class, but we're going to have to fail her because she can't do the written work."

2. A time will come when students who learn differently will have their own networking groups where they can share learning techniques and express their common concerns. Sometimes it's hard to be different alone. But being different together might not be so bad.

3. A time will come when not only parents and teachers will know how to teach learning differently students, but the other students in the class will also learn what learning differently is all about and in the process learn more about themselves as well as about their friends. Then no one should have to ask "Why does she get more time to take the test?" Or, "why are his notes handed to him?" They ask these questions now because they instinctively know that the learning differently student is as smart, if not smarter than themselves. So why the special treatment?

As Richard Lavoie so effectively demonstrates in his excellent workshop, ***How Difficult Can This Be?,*** "Being fair doesn't mean that everyone gets the same thing. Being fair means that everyone gets what they need."

4. A time will come when there will be a bill of rights for the learning differently student, although actually one already exists. According to the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child that came out in 1989, "Each child has the right to an education." But this could be rewritten a bit to state that, "all children have the right to be educated in a manner appropriate to their style of learning."

5. A time will come when employers will especially seek out learning differently students for jobs where inventive, creative minds are needed and where spatial awareness is an important factor. Computers with their grammar and spell checks are creating a level playing field, and we will see our learning differently students being able to compete, learn, and earn, with the best of them.

THE FUTURE OF THIS COMMITTEE

It is hoped that this report will not be the end of this committee. Already some have expressed interest in some sort of continuing communication between clubs, support groups and individuals concerned with these issues. Please contact the committee chair with all suggestions.

Perhaps if there is a large enough response, an addendum, including any corrections and/or additions, can be compiled for next year. Especially welcome are suggested additions and/or deletions to the Bibliography and Resource Materials list along with personal evaluations of the material.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

Newsflash! Newsflash! Hot off the press!

The European Children in Crisis have just faxed the following information:

Language Shock

Dyslexia Across Cultures

Video* *Guide* *Website

* A 30 minute video which explores the experiences of learners with dyslexia having to cope with new languages and new cultures.
* The Guide and Website will show LEARNERS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, and SCHOOLS where to go for help and what each European Member State has to offer for assessment, training and resources.

The first version will be **available in May 1998**. For further information, fill out the order form which is Attachment #8.

BOOKS

DYSLEXIA

This book doesn't make sens cens sns scens sense (Living and Learning with Dyslexia)
Augur, J. (1981; re-issued, 1996) Whurr Publishers, Ltd., London.
The introduction to this wonderful, practical, easy-to-read book states, "I consider myself to be in a unique position. I am the mother of dyslexic sons and a teacher of dyslexic children." Her account of both of her sons struggles and achievements as well as those of some of the students she taught is richly illustrated with examples of what parents and teachers should look for when they think there might be a problem. A definite must for parents, support groups, and teachers.

The 1998 Dyslexia Handbook
British Dyslexia Association. (1998) 98 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU. Can be ordered by enclosing a check for £5.00, plus postage, made out to the British Dyslexia Association. You can also order by phone (see **Useful Addresses**) and payment can be made by major credit card.
Contains more than 200 pages of information on how to recognize and live with dyslexia. It is aimed at dyslexics, their parents, teachers and employers.

The Gift of Dyslexia
Davies, Ronald D. (1994) Souvenir Press.
"The author is dyslexic and vividly describes the 'disorientation' which interfered with his own learning. In clear simple language and large dyslexia-friendly print, he sets out his program of 'orientation counseling' and 'symbol mastery' which is dyslexics' special ability to think in images or with their 'mind's eye'. This is not a self help manual, but would encourage young adult dyslexics as well as giving teachers fresh ideas and practical tips which are consistent with effective multi sensory teaching methods. (this review is taken from the Spring 1996 edition of the *News and Views*, published by the Scottish Dyslexia Trust - see *Useful Addresses*)

Overcoming Dyslexia
Hornsby, Dr. Bevá. London: Vermillon. Price £8.99. Dyslexia is commonly defined as a difficulty in learning to read and write, because it is at this stage of a child's development that the problem becomes most obvious. But what is it, and how can parents and teachers help their children?
Dr. Hornsby combines her experience as a psychologist, teacher and speech therapist to specialize in helping children with dyslexia. She has written this excellent book for them, their families and schools in order that the problems of dyslexia can be understood and tackled effectively. (description taken from book cover)

ADD/HD

A Parent's Guide to ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDERS
Bain, L. (1991) New York, NY: Dell Publishing, A Division of Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing Group.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A Handbook for Diagnosis and Treatment
Barkeley, R. (1990) New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Maybe You Know My Kid
Fowler, M. (1994). New York, NY: Birch Lane Press, A Division of Carol Publishing Group.

Children on Medication, Volume I
Gadow, K. (1986) California: Canter & Associates.

Driven to Distraction
Hallowell, E. & Ratey, J. (1994) New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Answers to Distraction
Hallowell, E. & Ratey, J. (1994) New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Attention Deficit Disorder: A Different Perception
Hartmann, T. (1993) Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Underwood-Miller.

ADD Success Stories: A Guide to Fulfillment for Families with Attention Deficit Disorder
Hartman, T. (1995) California: Underwood Books.

Attention Deficit Disorder and the Law: A Guide for Advocates
Latham, P. & Latham, P. (1992) Washington, DC: JKL Communications.

Mommy I Can't Sit Still
O'Leary, D. New Horizons Press

ADD and the College Student
Quinn, P. (1994) New York, NY: Magination Press.

The Hyperactive Child, Adolescent, and Adult: Attention Deficit Disorder Through The Lifespan
Wender, Paul H., M.D. (1987) New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

You & Your A.D.D. Child
Warren, P. & Capchart, J. (1995) Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Hyperactive Children Grown-Up
Weiss, G. & Hechtman, L. (1986) New York, NY: The Guilford Press

ESPECIALLY FOR TEACHERS

Mathematics For Dyslexics: A Teaching Handbook
Chinn, S. and Ashcroft, JR. (Eds.) Whurr. 1993.

A Guide for Parent & Educators: Attention Deficit Disorder
McEwan, E. (1995) Illinois: Harold Shaw Publishers.

Dyslexia: A Teaching Handbook
Thomson, Dr. M.E. & Watkins, E. J., Principals, East Court School for Dyslexic Children. (1990) Ramsgate: Whurr Publishers Limited, 19b Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN, England.
Contains information on how to set up a dyslexia unit, principals of teaching, general classroom procedures, suggestions on how to grade work, reading, writing, spelling, the older student and computers and the dyslexic.

School-based Assessments and Interventions for ADD Students
Swanson, J. (1992) California: K. C. Publishing.

FOR EVERYONE

7 Kinds of Smart
Armstrong, T. (1993) Plume Books, A Division of Penguin Books.

Multiple intelligences: The Theory in Practice
Gardner, H. (1993) New York, NY: Basic Books, A Division of Harper Collins.

Emotional Intelligence
Goleman, D. (1995) New York, NY: Bantam Books.

Endangered Minds

Healy, Jane M., Ph.D. New York: A Touchstone Book. Simon and Schuster. Price $11.

In this landmark assessment of the roots of the crisis in education, Jane M. Healy examines the reasons why children today are less able to concentrate, less able to absorb and analyze information, less able literally to think than the generations that preceded them.

Growing brains are physically shaped by experience. Today's children, bombarded by a fast-paced media culture, develop different "habits of mind" than did those of previous decades. Proving that the basic intelligence of children is not at issue, Healy shows how parents and teachers can make a critical difference by making them good learners not only during their school years but lifelong. (description taken from book cover)

Educational Care: A System for Understanding and Helping Children with Learning Problems at Home or in School

Levine, Melvin, M.D. Educator's Publishing Service, Inc, 31 Smith Place, Cambridge, MA 02138. Price $28.

Written for both parents and teachers, *Educational Care* is based on the view that education should be a system of care that is able to look after the specific needs of individual students. Using case studies, it identifies and illustrates twenty-five common behaviors or phenomena, observed in children at different ages, which often inhibit or interfere with their school performance.

After an analysis of each behavior, there are suggestions for both parents and teachers about what they can do to help the student with the particular learning problem. In addition, each chapter points out ways that adults can demystify the particular disability for the child by naming, explaining, and discussing it with him or her.

Following the descriptions of all the behaviors, the book examines a process for evaluating students and then describes an approach for influencing and managing their disabilities. A key element for success is a collaboration between parents and teachers to provide consistent support and targeted help for the specific problems of individual children. (Description taken from Educator's Publishing catalog

Keeping A Head in School: A Student's Book about Learning Abilities and Learning Disorders

Levine, Melvin D., M.D. Educator's Publishing Service, Inc. 31 Smith Place, Cambridge, MA 02138. price $22.

(Cassette recordings also available for $27.85 for six 90 minute cassettes)

Students with learning disorders can gain important insights into their problems with this nonfiction book that combines realism with justifiable optimism. Dr. Levine helps students not only to understand their own strengths and weaknesses but also more fully appreciate their individuality. His work promotes motivation as he suggests specific ways to approach work, bypass or overcome learning disorders, and manage the struggles that may beset students in school.

Keeping A Head in School can sometimes provide a shared reading experience: for example, parents and children can read the book together, developing a common vocabulary and understanding about the learning process. A tutor, counselor, or psychotherapist might want to discuss a particular chapter with a student. It may also be of interest to children without learning disorders. It could be a resource on health, development, learning, or psychology in the secondary school; or it could be reading matter for siblings or friends of students with learning disorders. (Description taken from Educator's Publishing catalog)

Survival Guide for College Students with ADD or LD
Nadeau, K. (1994). New York, NY: Magination Press.

Helping Children Overcome Learning Difficulties
Rosner, Dr. Jerome. Walker and Company, 435 Hudson Street, New York, New York, 10014. Price $18.95.
A step by step guide for parents and teachers to help children who have learning problems. It includes information about how and why to administer tests of visual analysis and auditory skills. It also features emphasis on language development activities and reading comprehension, perceptual skills, and development of an action plan to give each child maximum help.

How to Get Into the College of Your Choice . . . and How to Finance It
Stewart, Jayme (1991) Willam Marrow and Company, Inc., 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019.
Chapter 14 in this book details tactics for getting into college for students who learn differently.

Learning Styles
Vail, P. (1992) New Jersey: Modern Learning Press

In the Mind's Eye
West, T. (1991) New York: Prometheus Press. Price $26.95
This book is a kind of extended essay on the curious connections between creative ability, visual thinking, academic learning difficulties, and the remarkable people who, more or less, seem to have embodied these characteristics. New opportunities are currently unfolding that may require special talents and abilities in just those areas where many individuals with learning difficulties often have their greatest strength, such as in the visualization of scientific concepts and the analysis and manipulation of complex, three-dimensional information graphically displayed on personal computers. Evidence suggests that the conventional educational system may be focusing on the wrong kinds of skills and weeding out many of those who might have the most to give. Perhaps in the future we might see the solution of difficult problems in statistics, molecular biology, materials development, or higher mathematics coming from people who are graphic artists, sculptors, craftsmen, film makers, or designers of animated computer graphics. Different kinds of problems and different kinds of tools may require different talents and favor different kinds of brains. (description taken from book cover). Also contains profiles of such famous learning differently people as Faraday, Einstein, Edison, da Vinci, Churchill, Patton, and Yeats

COMPUTER PROGRAMS

see **GAMZ** brochure; card games and software using multisensory elements; this company will send a **free demo disk** upon request

see **British Dyslexia Association** for lists and evaluations of current computer software

TAPES

AUDIO

Dyslexia: Signposts to Success
can be ordered from the British Dyslexia Association; 10.00 £, plus postage. (see *Useful Addresses*)

see ***Keeping A Head in School: A Student's Book about Learning Abilities and Learning Disorders***

VIDEO

How Difficult Can This Be? The F.A.T. City Workshop
Lavoie, Richard D. Peter Rosen Productions. 70 minutes. 1989. PBS VIDEO and WETA. Washington, DC. PBS Home Video. Phone 800-645-4727; Fax: + 703-739-8131. Price in 1997, $49.95.
The video is a tape of a workshop in which Richard D. Lavoie, an American expert in the field of special education, vividly demonstrates what the classroom experience is often like for students with specific learning difficulties. At the end of the workshop, strategies are discussed which can aid students, parents and teachers in effectively modifying learning techniques. A must for all support group and special education libraries.

Understanding Dyslexia
(with accompanying booklet)
Programme 1: The Dyslexia Institute's Perspective
Programme 2: A Guide for Parents
Programme 3: A Guide for Teachers
Available from the British Dyslexia Institute (see *Useful Addresses*)

Getting Into the Driving Seat: Break Free of Dyslexia
A Day Video Production in association with Jools Dukeday Vidoe Arts and The Tailgate Theatre Company. British Dyslexia Association, 98 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU, Great Britain. Phone 44 (0734) 351 927
"A 20 minute video, packed with useful information on how today's technology can help you get round dyslexia and gain control over your life."

Get Ahead: A Short Cut to Straight A's
The Buzan Centre, Suite 2, Cardigan House, 37 Waterloo Road, Winton, Dorst BH9 1BD. Phone: 44 (0202) 533 593; Fax: 44 (0202) 534 572. Island World Video.
Based on psychologist Tony Buzan's "mind mapping" techniques, Lana Israel, a 16 year-old student from the USA demonstrates this study, note taking and creative thinking technique for students. The method is circular, rather than linear and involves the use of color and symbols, rather than words, as a memory aid

WEBSITES

BBC: for information on educational programming: **Edinfo@bbc.co.uk**
January 1998 saw the first broadcast of "Dyslexia in the Primary Classroom," in their series, **Teaching Today**, Staff Development.
for email: **www.bbc.co.uk/email.html**

CompuServe: those who use this internet service provider can try GO ADD, GO DISABILITIES, and GO DYSLEXIA

International Test for Dyslexia: a research project being conducted by John Everatt and Ian Symthe: **www.ukonline.co.uk/ian.symthe/idt**

One A.D.D. Place: **www.greatconnect.com/oneaddplace/famous.html**
famous people with ADD

Public Broadcasting Service: **www.pbs.org**

The British Dyslexia Association: **www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk/**
An excellent site providing among other things an on-line list of free information sheets and a publication list of the latest books on computer-aided learning as well as current software programs.

STOMP (Specialized Training of Military Parents) "A federally funded parent training and information center established to assist military families who have children with special education or health needs worldwide."
site: **http://idt.net/~wapave9/stomp.htm**
email: **wapave9@idt.net**

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Europe:

European Dyslexia Association (EDA)
12 Goldington Avenue
Bedford MK40 3BY, Great Britain
Phone: 44 1234 26 18 97; Fax: 44 1234 26 22 60

Belgium:

ASChiLD (Association Supporting Children Who Learn Differently)
c/o Susan van Alsenoy
Grote Stoppelbergen 5
B-2040 Zandvliet
Phone/Fax: 32 3 568 80 56
Email: vanAlsenoy@compuserve.com

Community Help Service
Rue St. Georges 102
B-1020 Brussels
Phone: 32 2 647 67 80; Fax: 32 2 646 72 73; 24 Hour Help Line: 32 2 648 40 14

European Children in Crisis
rue Defacqz 1
B-1000 Brussels
Phone: 32 2 537 48 36; Fax: 32 2 537 92 12

Denmark:

ADD - DAMP - foreningen
Kochsgade 31
DK-5000 Odense C

for dyslexics on **Fyn**:
Elisabeth Norregard Nielsen
Phone: 45 66 15 43 85

France:

Finding Help for Your Special Needs Child in France
Rosmary Launay
30 avenue d'Alliance
F-95600 Eaubonne

another useful contact person is Lori Marcotte, Phone: 33 1 4748 9875.

Germany:

Berlin:
All Kinds of Minds
Berlin International Dyslexia Support Group
Stubenrauchstr. 4
D-12161 Berlin
Phone/Fax: 49 39 851 1639

Frankfort:
Linda Loughran
c/o Frankfurt International School
An der Wadlust 15
D-61440 Oberursel
Phone: 49 6171 202 260; Fax: 49 6171 202 375
email: linda_loughran@fis.cocos.de

Great Britain:

BBC
4th Floor, Villier's House
The Broadway
Ealing, London W5 2PA
Information on educational programming

Children with Special Needs - American Women of Berkshire & Surrey
c/o Fred Evans
Pineacre Cottage
Sunning Avenue
Sunningdale, Berkshire SL5 9QE
Phone: 44 1344 28038
Fax: 44 1344 24716
(also can be reached through the club address)
This group has an extensive list of additional support groups in the area, specialist schools, agencies, counseling and test centers, doctors and psychologists for students with all kinds of special needs, not just dyslexia and AD/HD.

Dyslexia Computer Resource Centre
Department of Psychology
University of Hull
Hull HU6 7RX
email: dyslexia@hull.ac.uk

The British Dyslexia Association
98 London Road
Reading RG1 5AU
Phone: 44 (1734) 66 26 77; Fax: 44 (1734) 35 19 27; Helpline: 44 (1734) 66 82 71
email (Helpline): info@dyslexiahelp-bda.demon.co.uk
email (Admin): admin@bda-dyslexia.demon.co.uk
Represents over two million dyslexic children and adults. Has list of support groups and contacts world-wide. Offers books and pamphlets like, "A Survival Kit: Preventing Parental Burn-Out", "A Young Person's Guide to Dyslexia", and "Handwriting Helpline." Special selection for teachers at all levels. Computer information. On-line and telephone orders. Major credit cards accepted.

The Dyslexia Institute
133 Gresham Road, Staines
Middlesex TW18 2AJ
Phone: 44 1784 463 851; Fax: 11 1784 460 747

The Hornsby International Centre
Correspondence Course Division (IE)
Glenshee Lodge, 261 Trinity Road
London SW18 3SN
Phone: 44 (0181) 874 1844; Fax: 44 (0181) 877 9737
email: dyslexia@hornsby.demon.co.uk
Correspondence or distance learning courses in the theory and practice of teaching students with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia).

Scotland:

The educational system in Scotland is different and separate from that in England and Wales.

The Dyslexia Institute (Scotland)
Dyslexia Scotwest
74 Victoria Crescent Road
Dowan Hill
Glasgow G12 9JN
Phone: 44 (0141) 334 4549 and 44 (0141) 334 0066

The Scottish Dyslexia Association
Unit 3, Stirling Business Centre
Wellgreen, Stirling FK8 2DZ
Phone: 44 01786 446 650

The Scottish Dyslexia Trust
16 Hope Street
Edinburgh EH2 4DD

for information on **ADHD Parent Support Group** and newsletter call Gail Miller at 44 1977 510 866

Ireland:

Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
Anne Hughes
Suffolk Chambers, 1 Suffolk Street
Dublin 2
Phone: 353 1 679 0276, Fax: 353 1 679 0273

Hyperactive/Attention Deficit Disorder
Mrs. Stephanie Mahoney
25 Lawnswood Park, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
Phone: 353 1 288 9766

Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education
The Teacher's Centre
Drumcondra, Dublin 9

Italy:

Rome:
Pamela Kvilekval, M.A.
Viale Marco Polo 104 int. 11
I-00154 Roma
Phone: 39 6 575 82 25 or 39 30 36 78 68

Luxembourg:

Dyspel: Dyslexia & Special Needs Group
c/o Caroline Emslei, Secretary
6 rue de la Résistance
L-8020 Strassen
Phone: 352 31 73 84

Morocco:

Casablanca American School
Route de la Mecque
Lotissement Ougoug
Quartier Californie
20 150 Casablanca, Morocco
Phone: 212 2 21 41 15/16; Fax: 212 2 21 24 88;
email: 103113.1612@compuserve.com

Norway:

M.B.D. Forenignen
Arnstein Arnebersvei 30
N-1324 Lysaker

The Netherlands:

Parents United for children who learn differently
American School of The Hague
Rijksstraatweg 200
NL-2242 BX Wassenaar
Phone: school: 31 70 514 0113; support group: 31 70 514 21 53 or 31 70 517 7515

Sweden:

FMLS (Forbundet Mot Las-o, Skrivsvarigheteri Goteborg)
Arvid Lindmansg. 3D
417 26 Goteborg

Familijstodcentrum for Barn med Inlarningssvarigheter
Prastgardsangen 12
412 71 Goteborg

Swedish Websites: **www. kalbynet.se/dyslexi**
www. educ.goteborg.se/usam/pforum/las/littlist/htm (provides a list of books in Swedish about dyslexia)

Switzerland:

Zurich:
The Learning Room Study Center
Dufourstrasse 137
CH-8034 Zurich, Switzerland
Phone: 41 1 383 77 49; Fax: 41 1 383 23 48

U.S.A.:

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders (CH.A.D.D.)
499 Northwest 70th Avenue, Suite 308
Plantation, Florida 33317, U S A
Phone: 1 305 587-37**:** Fax: 1 305 948 0410

Learning Disabilities Association of America
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Phone: 1 412 341 1515 or 1 412 341 8077

National Center for Learning Disabilities
99 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016
Phone: 1 212 687 7211

Office of Special Education
US Department of Education
Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW, Room 3132
Washington, DC 20202-2524

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cover Letter and Questionnaire

2. Famous People

3. Advice for Parents

4. Suggestions for Teachers

5. Articles of Agreement, ASChiLD

6. Parents United

7. Dyspel's chart

8. Order Form for European Children in Crisis, BBC Video Pack

INSERTS

1. European Children in Crisis Booklet, "Children with Specific Learning Difficulties A Guide for English-Speaking Families in Belgium - with a List of Schools and Checklist"

2. GAMZ flyer

3. Dyspel Newsletter

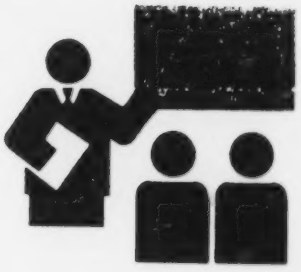
4. Care-Hellas brochure

5. ASChiLD brochure

Attachment # 1

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas

FOUNDED 1931



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL CHALLENGES

What are special challenges?

Any sort of physical or learning difficulty which would require exceptional support by the educational system in which the student is enrolled.

Why is this a concern for members of FAWCO clubs?

Often club members find themselves dealing with situations that occur or are discovered after they have chosen to live overseas. Those of us who find ourselves in a non-English speaking environment are frequently at a disadvantage in discovering just what options and solutions are available in our host countries. If the student is enrolled in a national school, language and cultural expectations can prove frustrating, bewildering, or outright incomprehensible. If the student is enrolled in an international school, parents might find that help that is taken for granted at home is either available in a diminished form or completely non-existent.

What is the purpose of this study?

To exchange information pertinent to these problems, and through this exchange, to educate and empower all FAWCO members so that they might be of help not only to those who are currently coping with these situations but also to those who might find themselves someday faced with similar obstacles.

How will the study be conducted?

The study will consist of **two parts**. The enclosed questionnaire will form the bases of the **first report** which will be presented at the **FAWCO Interim Conference** in March of 1998. This report will deal **specific learning difficulties**, such as dyslexica and attention deficit disorder, and hopes to compare how both national and international schools deal with these problems as well as compile information on databases, audio-visual resource materials and self-help groups.

The **second study** will deal with the possibilities offered in both national and international schools to **students who are physically challenged**. This report is slated to be presented at the 1999 **FAWCO Biennial Conference**.

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FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF AMERICANS ABROAD

Who serves on the ESC Committee?

Anyone who is a member of a FAWCO club and would like to serve as a member of this committee is very welcome to do so. Also information, ideas and suggestions from any source are always appreciated.

In the area of **specific learning difficulties**, the following people have expressed an interest: Maureen Colvard, AAW Aberdeen, Jan Curren, AW Berkshire & Surrey, and Lynn Weibel, AWC Basel. We are aware of the existence of support groups in the following cities: All Kinds of Minds, Berlin; ASChiLD (Association Supporting Children who Learn Differently), Antwerp; Dyspel, Luxembourg; and European Children in Crisis, Brussels.

For **physical challenges**: Donna Sebti, AIWC Casablanca; support groups: BRUSH (Brussels Support for the Handicapped); Nejla Essaafi, Handicap International, Casablanca.

Who should fill out the questionnaire?

Not necessarily the Rep! Please request that a parent of a student or a student herself who is dealing with a specific learning difficulty fill out the survey as she is the most likely to know of the options available in your area. If possible, try to involve families who have students attending both national and international schools. The Rep or other member of your club's FAWCO committee should attempt to locate such volunteers and get the form to them. Make copies if you wish. Often the information sought will probably be found outside the club, at the international school or in a self-help group. But all your club members will benefit from the knowledge that such information exists.

When is the deadline?

All questionnaires should be received at the address below by **November 15, 1997**

Where to send the information?

Any questions may be addressed at any time and the questionnaires returned by post, fax or email to:

Susan van Alsenoy, ESC Chair
Grote Stoppelbergen 5
B-2040 Zandvliet
Belgium

Phone/Fax: 32 3 568 80 56 (the fax is always on)
Email: vanAlsenoy@compuserve.com

If you or the persons assisting you find that **the information requested does not exist in your area**, please cut out the coupon at the very end of the survey and return it to the above address so we will know that you have received this material.

The committee thanks you beforehand on behalf of all the families and educators who are supporting our students with special challenges for any time and effort you are able to devote to this project .

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas
FOUNDED 1931

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL CHALLENGES

1997 QUESTIONNAIRE
CHILDREN WHO LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Please note:

- For the purpose of this study, when speaking of students with specific learning difficulties, we refer to students of normal or above normal intelligence who have been assessed as having dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, or a similar learning difficulty.
- For optimum results, this form should be completed by persons familiar with the options available to students with specific learning difficulties in your area in both national and international schools.
- Please use more paper if needed to answer any of the questions.
- The **deadline** for submitting this survey is **November 15, 1997**.

Return the completed form to **Susan van Alsenoy**, Grote Stoppelbergen 5, B-2040 Zandvliet, Belgium. **Phone/Fax:** 32 3 568 80 56 **Email:** vanAlsenoy@compuserve.com

Name of Club:

_____

Name(s) of person(s) filling out this survey:

_____

_____

Address(es)

_____

_____

_____

Phone(s): _____
Fax(es): _____
Email: _____

International Schools

1. What are the names and addresses of the international schools in your area

_____

_____

_____

_____

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2. Which ones, if any, accept boarding students? _____

3. Which of these schools, if any, make special provision for students with specific learning difficulties? _____

_____

4. In what manner is such provision made (e.g. assessment, special education teachers, mainstreaming or separate classes, tutoring, use of computers and tape recorders to take notes and exams, more time for testing, etc.)? Please give specific examples: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Is there any charge, above the normal tuition requirements, for such provisions (e.g. must the family pay for the assessment or for special help)? _____

_____

6. Are special conferences with the school's personnel easy to arrange? _____

National Schools

1. Can children be sent to any school in the host country, or must they attend a specific one in their residential area? _____

2. Does your host country provide any day or boarding schools that specialize in teaching students with specific learning difficulites? _____

3. If so, are there any extra charges to the family if they choose to send their child to such a school? _____

4. Do the regular schools make any special provisions for students with specific learning difficulties? _____

5. If so, in what manner is such provision made (e.g. assessment, special education teachers, mainstreaming or separate classes, tutoring, use of computers and tape recorders to take notes and exams, more time for testing, etc.)? Please give specific examples: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Is there any charge, above the normal tuition requirements, for such provisions (e.g. must the family pay for the assessment or for special help)? _____

_____

7. Are special conferences with the school's personnel easy to arrange? _____

Support Groups

1. Are there any support groups in your area for students and/or families who are dealing with specific learning difficulties? _____

2. If yes, are any of these groups available in English? _____

3. What are the names and addresses of the groups? _____

4. How many members does a group usually have? _____

5. Of what does the membership consist (e.g. only English speakers, families, parents only, students only, educational personal, etc.)? _____

6. How often does the group meet? _____

7. How are the meetings structured (e.g. very formal, purely social, etc.) and in what manner?

8. In what sort of activities does the group engage (e.g. fund raising, mutual support, education of members and/or the community, training, support for the school)? Please give specific examples: _____

9. Is the group a legal entity in the host country? _____

10. If available in English, please include a copy of any governing documents.

11. If available in English, please include a copy of any brochure descriptive of the group.

12. If available, please include a sample of the group's newsletter or minutes of a typical meeting.

13. Using the rest of the paper and/or any additional sheets, please list any books, video tapes, Internet addresses or other resources that the group's members have found particularly helpful.

14. Likewise, please describe any tactics that have been helpful in dealing with schools or with any other problems presented by specific learning difficulties.

We are sorry, but we were unable to obtain any of the requested information.

Name of Club: _____

Famous People

With Attention Deficit Disorders and Learning Disabilities

WITH PERSEVERANCE THEY MADE IT. . .

. . .SO CAN YOU!

Albert Einstein

Galileo

Mozart

Wright Brothers

Leonardo da Vinci

Cher

Bruce Jenner

Tom Cruise

Charles Schwab

Henry Winkler

Danny Glover

Walt Disney

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Jason Kidd

Russell Varian

Robin Williams

Louis Pasteur

Werner von Braun

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Robert Kennedy

Luci Baines Johnson Nugent

George Bush's Children

Prince Charles

Gen. Westmoreland

Eddie Rickenbacker

Gregory Boyington

Harry Belafonte

F. Scot Fitzgerald

Mariel Hemingway

Steve McQueen

George C. Scott

Tom Smothers

Suzanne Somers

Lindsay Wagner

John Lennon

Greg Louganis

Winston Churchill

Henry Ford

Stephen Hawkings

Jules Verne

Alexander Graham Bell

Woodrow Wilson

Hans Christian Anderson

Nelson Rockefeller

Thomas Edison

Gen. George Patton

Agatha Christie

John F. Kennedy

Whoopi Goldberg

Rodin

Thomas Thoreau

David H. Murdock

Dustin Hoffman

Pete Rose

Russell White

George Bernard Shaw

Beethoven

Carl Lewis

"Magic Johnson

Sylvester Stallone

Wrigley

John Corcoran

Alberto Tnmba

Jackie Stewart

Weyerhauser Family

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Who Are These Famous People With Learning Disabilities and/or Attention Deficit Disorder?

Case I

Male, age 17. Senior year of high school. Has obtained certificate from physician stating that nervous breakdown makes it necessary for him to be out of school for 6 months. Not a good all around student. Has no friends; teachers consider him a problem. Late in beginning to speak. Generally poor adjustment to school. Father is ashamed of son's lack of athletic ability. Boy has odd mannerisms. Makes up his own religion, chants, hymns to himself. Parents also say they regard this child as "odd", "different".

Case II

Male, age 6. Head unusually large at birth; thought by doctors to have had extremely high fever which resulted in brain damage. Three siblings died before this child's birth. Child diagnosed as abnormal and mentally ill. Mother emotionally involved; disagrees with doctors, angry confrontation, mother withdrew child from school, saying she intends to teach him by herself.

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Case III

Female, age 18. Orphan, in custody of grandmother. Homely child, rejected by her mother who was separated from alcoholic husband, now deceased. Child has been found to lie and to steal candy. At age 5, swallowed a penny to attract attention. Active fantasy life; viewed self as mistress of the father's household, which cannot be managed by widowed grandmother. One young uncle drinks excessively; young aunt despondent over love affair, locks self in room. Grandmother dresses student oddly. Puts her in braces to straighten back, refuses to let her have any playmates. Student did not attend elementary school. Aunt on paternal side is physically handicapped; uncle asthmatic.

Case I: Albert Einstein
Case II: Thomas Edison
Case III: Eleanor Roosevelt

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PROVIDING LEARNING SUPPORT

Most parents are not trained to teach, so ask the advice of the specialists who areworking with your learner. Practice and drill skills that have already been introduced to your learner rather than

1. Start with short sessions and gradually increase the time. A good guide is to stop when the learner is at the peak of success. Don't push to the point of failure.

2. Be as objective as possible and as patient as you can. Speak in a quiet, firm voice. Make commands and directions short and simple.Wait before giving a second instruction.

3. If a task is too difficult for your learner, move on to something easier. Later, after you have made the first task easier, you can return to it. Never introduce a task by implying that it is easy. Never compare the learner to anyone else.

4. When you are certain that the learner can do a task, gently insist that he or she tries to do it. Always offer as much support as is necessary. Support may be verbal or mean doing some of the task.

5. Be aware of your learner's abilities as well as difficulties. Use these to guarantee success. Don't continue doing tasks that are too easy for your learner. There should be some challenge to hold your learner's attention and maintain motivation.

6. Praise your learner for even the smallest success, but be genuine in your praise. Do not emphasise failure. Follow every error with a task that the learner can succeed with.

7.Avoid saying negative words like "no" and "that's wrong". Use agreed signals to encourage the learner to try again. For example, when an error is made in oral reading, interrupt the reading by repeating the last few words that were read correctly.

8. Really listen to your learner. Often the learner can tell you the best ways to help. Everyone has to work out their own learning strategies. Encourage this.

9. Set aside specific times during the week to work with your learner. Let these times be special for the two of you alone. Use it as a time to talk and provide moral support as well as work.

10. Relax with the learner. Both of you should enjoy these sessions as a positive learning experience. If the learner is not motivated, no learning will take place. If you do not both look forward to these sessions , something is wrong.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

IRELAND

A. C. L. D.

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by H. Alan Sayles

HELPING WITH HOMEWORK

1. Provide a quiet, comfortable room with a sturdy chair and desk or table. Books and materials should be within easy reach. Make sure there is ventilation and that the room is neither too hot nor too cold. Besides an overhead light, there should be a desklamp of about 60 watts aimed so as not to produce glare.

2. Always stay close at hand. Be there when your learner needs you. Make it easy to ask for help. When you are asked to help, do only what you are asked and don't question why the learner needs help.

3. Be aware of, make a note of and take control of the amount of time and energy that your learner spends on each homework task. If you feel too much is spent on any one task, discuss it with the teacher(s). Try to negotiate a compromise so that your learner can do some homework without being unduly burdened. For example, write one page when two are set or do the odd numbered problems instead of all. Ask the teacher for an 'escape clause', e.g. the learner never has to do more than 30 minutes of Irish.

4. Check with your learner beforehand on what exactly is to be done and how it is to be presented. This can eliminate a lot of later frustration. Encourage the use of a homework journal to record all assignments, when they are due and the time taken. Use the journal to communicate with the school about your learner's efforts and difficulties.

5. Talk to your learner's teachers(s) regularly. If your learner has difficulty in writing down assignments correctly in school, ask the teacher(s) to print assignments on the blackboard, then read them out slowly, repeating more than once and then finally to check that the learner has copied it all down correctly.

6. Make sure that your learner has all the materials that are needed to do the homework before starting. Provide a box with pens, pencils, markers, ruler, scissors, paper, cello tape, pritt stick, correcting pens or fluid, rubbers, compass, triangles, protractor, number square, table book or whatever is necessary.

7. Provide useable and readable reference books. Consider learner's reading skills when selecting books. Consider spelling dictionaries to support writing and CD-Roms as sources of information for projects. Many texts are available on audio cassette or in abridged versions.

8. Spell on paper any words that your learner asks for. Don't try to start a spelling lesson when your learner is doing homework. Read aloud words or chapters as needed. Don't suggest using a dictionary or sounding it out. Just simply provide what is needed.

9. Try to avoid doing the homework for your learner. However, if, under the circumstances, you must, be sure that the learner at least learns from the experience and ends knowing how to do it. Be sure to write a note to the teacher to explain how much you had to help and the exact difficulty your learner had. Use the homework journal to communicate with the teacher.

10. Provide as much moral support and encouragement as is possible, without resorting to pressure, threats or promises.

Homework can be a positive, learning experience if it is approached calmly and with common sense. No teacher means to cause your child to experience emotional upset intentionally. The best way to cope with homework is to work with your learner and with the school. Talk with your learner and talk with the teacher(s) regularly. Try to offer solutions, rather than excuses.

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by Marion Welchman and Julia Welchman.

Attachment # 4

Suggestions	Reasons
1. Explain to the pupil what his problems are.	1. Previously he has probably known that he has problems but didn't know what they were or why. Thus an explanation can help his understanding of himself.
2. Attempt to restore the pupil's confidence in himself.	2. Usually the pupil has been referred to as a 'failure'; now comes the opportunity for him to succeed. LET HIM REALISE THIS.
3. Seat the pupil beside you.	3. In order to alleviate the possibility of reversals, never sit opposite your pupil; this also sets a less formal atmosphere.
4. Never force a pupil to conform to the day's lesson.	4. Sometimes they do not feel like "working"; the art is to recognize when they are trying to 'put it on'. There are many ways of teaching a specific point without using paper and pen - e.g. games. Be versatile to the pupil's needs.
5. Avoid putting the pupil under pressure of time or competition.	5. Such pressures usually make pupils concentrate on being first rather than being correct. Speed is negligible when correctness is important. Competition may also result in experiencing repeated failure.
6. Be flexible regarding the content of the lesson.	6. Sometimes a pupil is not ready for a certain stage even though you may feel that he is. Either make a different approach to the point or leave it for a time.
7. Be aware of the possibility of the pupil using avoidance techniques.	7. Frequently pupils find ways of 'by-passing' certain areas in order to achieve the aim - e.g. illegible handwriting so that their errors are not detected.
8 Be constructively critical.	8. It is preferable to give reasons for errors and ways of overcoming them rather than negative re-inforcement.
9. Permit various aids to help the pupil.	9. Aids can help the pupil to concentrate more fully on the actual work rather than the mechanics of working - e.g. a bookmark will help him to concentrate on his reading line by line; a typewriter will eradicate poor writing and has inbuilt motivation; a tape recorder will help him to remember his homework or complex instructions.
10. Encourage the pupil to write on alternate lines.	10. This aids the teacher to read the often poor and cramped handwriting. It is also beneficial to have corrections placed near the errors for comparison rather than at the end of the exercise.
11. Make sure that the allotted homework instructions are understood by the pupil.	11. Poor eye-hand co-ordination over a distance may result in incorrect coping from a black-board. It is preferable to write out the homework for the pupil and read the instructions to him, checking that he understood them.
12. Ask parents to read the homework instructions.	12. The pupil may well forget the allotted work and be unable to read complex instructions; therefore, much time and frustration can be avoided if the homework instructions are re-read to the pupil by his parents.
13. When marking work be realistic but not demoralising.	13. If the teacher marks every error it could well be depressing to the pupil. Content is important and a comment regarding its standard is psychologically preferable to numerous crosses.
14. Red pens marking errors are discouraging!	14. All too frequently red marks mean errors, and are demoralishing. Fluorescent markers are more subtle and highlight the errors unobtrusively.
15. Find a particular area that the pupil is intested in.	15. An unwillingness to learn may be overcome by presenting the work through different materials - do not discourage comics, etc., if a child is eager to read them.
16. Find reading books that interest the pupil even if the level is higher than his ability.	16. Due to the frequent lack of suitable reading material that retains the pupil's interest, it is often necessary to supplement with higher level books but this presents an opportunity to read to the pupil which helps to retain his interest.

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ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

Article I. Name

The name shall be the Association Supporting Children with Learning Difficulties (ASChiLD).

Article II. Objective

The purpose of the Association shall be to provide support in English for persons who are confronted with the challenges created by learning difficulties.

Article III Language

English shall be the language used in all business transacted by the Association.

Article IV. Membership

Membership shall be open to any persons who interests and objectives coincide with the purpose of the Association.

Section A. Types of Membership

1. Honorary
   Honorary membership may be offered to any person deemed worthy by an unanimous vote of the Board of Directors.
2. Family
   Family membership shall be available to families in which one or more of the members experiences learning difficulties.
3. Student
   Student membership shall be available to students coping with learning difficulties as well as persons who wish to learn more about this challenge.
4. Professional
   Professional membership shall be available to those persons who are qualified to teach or otherwise assist persons with learning difficulties.
5. Non-Resident
   Non-Resident membership shall be available to former members of the association who no longer reside in the area of the association's activities.

Section B. Resignation

Resignation from the Association shall be made in writing to the Secretary.

Article V. Administration

Section A. Officers

1. Director of Administration
   The Director of Administration shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the Board of Directors and shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office.
2. Secretary
   The Secretary shall take minutes of all meetings of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors, make a register of the names and addresses of the membership and be responsible for sending notices of times and places of meetings. Further the Secretary shall assist the Director of Administration as required and shall succeed to the position of Director of Administration should it become vacant.
3. Treasurer
   The Treasurer shall collect and, under the direction of the Board of Directors, disburse the funds of the Association, which shall at all time be open to the inspection of the General Assembly. The Treasurer shall report in writing at every meeting of the General Assembly, giving the balance of money on hand and the outstanding obligations of the Association and send a yearly statement to each member of the Association. The Treasurer shall be empowered to sign checks and to disburse funds for administrative purposes and for money-raising projects. The Treasurer is responsible for all financial records up until the end of each fiscal year or the end of her term of office and must have these records professionally audited before relinquishing her duties.

Section B. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers plus any other positions that the Officers shall deem necessary such as a Director of Publicity or a Director of Fund Raising.

Section C. Election

The Officers and any other Directors shall be elected by a majority vote of the resident membership. Three months prior to the election, the Director of Administration shall appoint a member to serve as the Director of Nominations. This Director shall canvas the membership for suitable candidates for the elected positions and shall submit in writing to the entire membership a proposed slate for the new Board of Directors one month before the election. Prior to the time of election, additional candidates may be proposed from the membership and added to the slate before voting.

Section D. Term of Office

The Board of Directors shall serve for a two year period. In case of a vacancy, the Director of Administration shall, with the approval of the majority of the other Board Members appoint a member to fill the vacant position. If the Director of Administration cannot serve, the Secretary shall fill this position. No member of the Board of Directors can serve in the same position for more than two consecutive terms.

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Section E. Transfer of Records

Members of the Board of Directors shall, upon retirement from office, turn over to their successors all records and correspondence pertaining to their term of office.

Section E. Quorum

Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors present or represented by proxy shall constitute a quorum at a Board Meeting.

Article VI. Meetings

Section A. General Assembly

The General Assembly shall be comprised of all the resident members of the Association. The General Assembly has the power to elect the Board of Directors, approve the accounts of the prior fiscal year, the budget for the current fiscal year and the amount, if any, of the yearly dues. Further the General Assembly may modify the Articles of Association or adopt new ones, and has the power to dissolve the Association.

Section B. Frequency of Meetings

The Association shall have monthly meetings.

Section C. Quorum

Two-thirds of the resident membership represented in person or by proxy shall constitute a quorum at a General Assembly meeting.

Article VII. Financial Administration

Section A. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall commence on the first day of May.

Section B. Dues

The amount of annual dues, if any, shall be recommended by the Treasurer and voted upon by the General Assembly one month prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. Honorary Members shall pay no dues. Family and Professional Members shall pay regular dues. Students and Non-Resident Members shall pay one-half of the yearly dues.

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Article VIII. Limitation of Authority

Section A. No committee or individual member shall have the power to commit the Association either financially or to matters of policy without the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section B. Any resigning or excused members, as well as the heirs of a deceased member, are in no circumstances whatsoever entitled to the property of the Association. They may not reclaim the sums paid by themselves or by their predecessors in title. They may not demand any statements or submissions of accounts, nor the affixing of seals, nor the taking of an inventory.

IX. Parliamentary Authority

Section A. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Articles of Association.

X. Amendments.

Section A. Amendments

The Articles of Association may be amended at any meeting of the General Assembly by a majority vote of the members present or represented by written proxy.

1. Proposals for change may be made by any resident member and submitted to the Board of Directors.
2. All such proposed amendments shall be sent to all resident members at least one month prior to the meeting at which the voting will take place.

XI. Duration and Dissolution

Section A. Duration

The duration of the Association shall be for an indefinite period of time.

Section B. Dissolution

1. A meeting of the Association may be called for the purpose of considering dissolution.
2. Every resident member shall receive advanced notification of the meeting and shall be made aware of the reasons for dissolution.
3. A resolution to dissolve the Association is carried by an affirmative vote of one more than 50% of the resident members present or represented by proxy.
4. In the event of dissolution, two delegates shall be elected by a majority vote to act together with the Treasurer to settle all debts and to dispose of any remaining assets to charity.

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PARENTS UNITED

for children who learn differently

WHO are we?

Parents who have the desire to talk with others who face the challenges and frustrations of raising and educating a child with differences.

WHO are our children?

Capable students who may have learning/language disabilities, attention problems, or are experiencing difficulties at school. Many fall between the cracks and are easily misunderstood.

WHAT are our goals?

1) Providing Parent to Parent support.
2) Locating professional resources.
3) Promoting education and familiarization with learning differences among ASH staff, students and parents.
4) Building a collection of relevant information for the ASH library.

WHERE to find us?

Watch for Parents United announcements in the ASH flash and monthly PTA bulletins regarding our

Evening informational meetings
Morning support coffees

for further information call Nancy Sheiman 070-5142153 or Roz Blogier 070-5177515 or leave a message for Parents United in the PTA mailbox at the ASH reception area.

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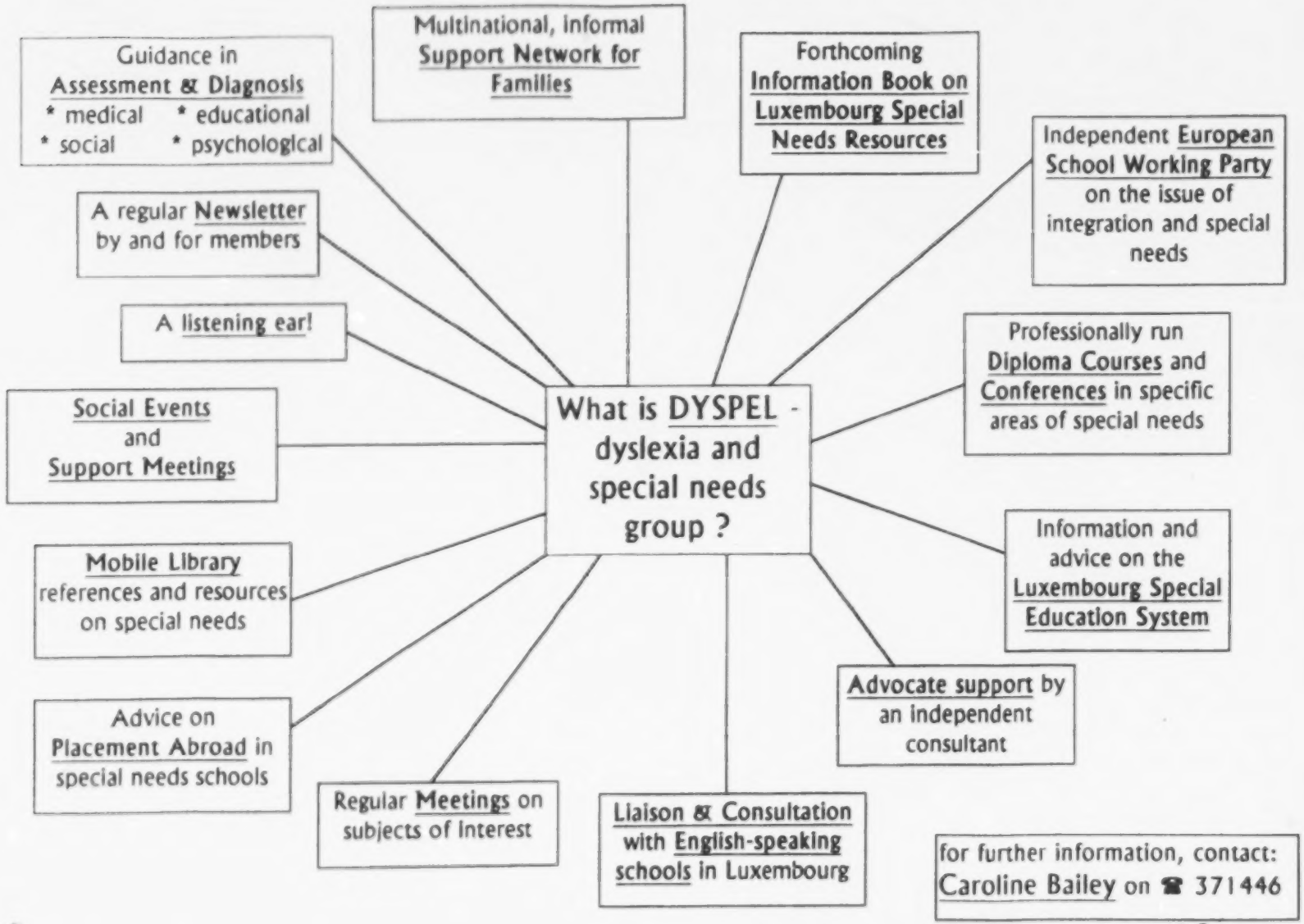
What is DYSPEL - dyslexia and special needs group ?
Guidance in Assessment & Diagnosis
* medical * educational
* social * psychological
Multinational, informal Support Network for Families
Forthcoming Information Book on Luxembourg Special Needs Resources
Independent European School Working Party on the issue of integration and special needs
A regular Newsletter by and for members
A listening ear!
Professionally run Diploma Courses and Conferences in specific areas of special needs
Social Events and Support Meetings
Information and advice on the Luxembourg Special Education System
Mobile Library references and resources on special needs
Advocate support by an independent consultant
Advice on Placement Abroad in special needs schools
Regular Meetings on subjects of interest
Liaison & Consultation with English-speaking schools in Luxembourg
for further information, contact:
Caroline Bailey on ☎ 371446

EUROPEAN CHILDREN IN CRISIS * for children with learning difficulties
TRAINING INFORMATION FUNDRAISING
rue Defacqz 1 . 1000 Brussels ☎ (32 2) 537 48 36 Fax 537 92 12 Account # 310-1238787-86
Patron : Mrs David Colvin, wife of the British Ambassador to Belgium

A D V A N C E P U B L I C I T Y

L A N G U A G E S H O C K

- dyslexia across cultures
Multi Media Training Pack:
- Video - Guide - Website

Does your child have difficulties with reading, writing, short-term memory or speech? Where can your child be assessed? How can children on the move maximise their chances in school as they face up to new languages and cultures? How can teachers adapt their methods to different learning styles in different cultural settings? How can schools provide the right backup for these children on the move?

In **L A N G U A G E S H O C K**,

- **a 30 MINUTE VIDEO**

explores the experience of learners with dyslexia having to cope with new languages and new cultures. It is introduced by former Formula 1 racing champion Jackie Stewart, himself dyslexic. It is co-produced by the BBC and European Children in Crisis with support from the European Commission and the Community Involvement Team supported by Levis Strauss, Europe

- **the GUIDE and WEBSITE**

show LEARNERS, PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS where to go for help and what each Member State has to offer for assessment, training and resources.

The first version will be available in May 1998. If you are interested in receiving further information, please kindly fill out and return the form below to the letterhead address. The first editions of the Pack will be available in English, French and German.
Indicated price : 1.800 BEF / 42.50 ECU March 1998

I am interested in receiving information on the Multi Media Training Pack - LANGUAGE SHOCK - on the effects of dyslexia across cultures.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
_____
TELEPHONE/FAX: _____
LANGUAGE PREFERENCE _____

Illustrations by kind courtesy of Quentin Blake

Students Who Learn Differently

ADDENDUM

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas

Educational Support Committee

London

March 1999

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The Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas and the Educational Support Committee would like to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the contribution of **Johnson & Johnson**, Belgium, which assisted with the presentation of this study by generously providing for its photocopying.

Johnson & Johnson

We thank them for their very kind support of the activities of the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas and the work of the Educational Support Committee.

INTRODUCTION

This study was prepared as a result of a questionnaire that was sent to all FAWCO clubs in the fall of 1998 (see Attachment #1).

This report was created to serve as an addendum to the 1998 FAWCO study, ***Students Who Learn Differently***, and is not intended to stand by itself. The same statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and statement of policy that apply to the original study apply also to this one.

This Addendum was compiled and presented by the chair of the Educational Support Committee, Susan van Alsenoy, AWC Antwerp.

PARTICIPATING CLUBS

The following FAWCO clubs submitted information for the Addendum:

AAW Aberdeen
AWC Antigua & Barbuda
AWC Antwerp
AWC Basel
AW Berkshire and Surrey
AWC Brussels
AIWC Casablanca
AWC Dublin
AWC Edinburgh
AIW Genoa
AWO Greece
AWC Liechtenstein
AWC Luxembourg
AWO Moscow
AW Surrey
AW Ticino
AWA Vienna
AWC Zürich
Chilterns AWC
Community of Americans in Southern England
IWA Graz
Ulster AWC
US Women's Club of Fyn

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Since the "Students Who Learn Differently" report was presented in March of last year, how has your club informed your members of its existence?

- Newsletter: 15
- Monthly membership meeting (brought it and made an announcement): 7
- Distributed to local international schools: 3
- Report exhibited in FAWCO display at clubhouse: 1
- Copies handed to individual teachers: 4
- Copy sent to local support group for students who learn differently: 1
- Placed a copy in the club library: 1
- Report shown to FAWCO committee members: 1

How many, if any, of your club members have requested to see a copy of the report?

- 19

Do the people who have read the report feel that they have derived any benefit from it?

- "The suggestions for teachers were helpful. I plan to share with other teachers. I was pleased to have some addresses for books and correspondence courses dealing with this topic." (written by a woman who is the principal and a teacher at a private elementary school.)
- "I'm the mother of three (two school-aged), and I must say I received a boost of confidence from your report which I hope I can pass on to my frustrated learners."
- Local support group found it to be exceptionally good.
- "Terrific, comprehensive, hopeful report. As a mother of and teacher of such children, I felt the report was an excellent, concrete, professional and practical guide. Thank you!"
- "This is an excellent report."
- "Not really. Feel that the report was not that relevant to our club."

Do you have any suggestions as to how this report might have been made more effective?

- "I feel that most articles on dyslexia deal primarily with identifying the problems and only superficially address concrete and effective ways to handle it. I would like to find a source for learning materials designed for students with dyslexia."
- "I would have liked more resource information."
- "It was too long for information sake and more people would have read the report if it were presented in a more condensed pocket-sized form."
- "It would have been very interesting to learn more specifics about bi-lingual learning. I notice that a lot of bi-lingual learners are at a disadvantage in local schools. They have learning difficulties and experience many of the symptoms listed for dyslexia and ADD although they don't have these disabilities. I'd be interested in investigating this further."
- "The report appears to be effective. It just seems that there is not a need in our community. The school system here for foreigners is very good. Therefore, people are probably getting their information there."

Any additions or corrections to the report?

- Correction to the list of participants in the 1998 ***Students Who Learn Differently*** study:
  We extend our sincere apology to **Chilterns AWC** whose name should have appeared in the original list of clubs participating in the 1998 report.

Other comments:

- "We're very interested in the subject, and hope to have some kind of evening program or seminar during the next year."
- "Your report was informative and took a very positive approach to this subject which I appreciated."
- One mother wrote:
  Our son struggled with dyslexia for years . . . It was so hard for him . . . He was born (outside of the US) and we lived (there) until he was a senior in high school. Since there was no help for his problem there, I had to teach him how to read with the help of a specialist (back in the US) – long distance. He graduated from high school and went three years to college . . . He is a wonderful artist . . . He is also an outstanding athlete and has more common sense than most people.

Special Events:

- AWC Brussels hosted an Educational Forum on bi-lingualism and special needs.
- A teacher wrote, "I had my classes do reports on the people who learned differently, and the kids were amazed. Eisenhower was an excellent map-reader because he saw everything in 3-D.
- One special education teacher would like to see the video, ***How Difficult Can This Be?*** shown to the school's Theory of Knowledge class.

HINTS FOR MAKING FAWCO MATERIAL MORE EFFECTIVE IN YOUR CLUB AND COMMUNITY

The somewhat disappointing answers regarding the number of people who read ***Students*** might in part be due to the fact that the deadline for returning the questionnaire was early. Some clubs hadn't started to publicize the report until after the summer holiday. However despite newsletter articles and announcements at meetings, a lot of FAWCO material, not just ***Students***, is not getting out there. The following are some suggestions as to how this situation might be improved:

- ask for a speaking slot at the general meeting and **read** part of the report to them.
- **publish** part of the report in your newsletter; we are happy to send any requested sections via email so you don't have to retype.
- **summarize** the report; one rep writes, "A statement that we received this report did nothing to arouse interest, whereas a 1 ½ page summary did get some response. I expect to hear more."
- have a **special display** table each meeting featuring **one aspect** of FAWCO each month (e.g. environment, our NGO status, special education needs, other club newsletters, voter

registration as appropriate, the R&D Fund, scholarships); putting a whole bunch of stuff out each month can be confusing to members who are unfamiliar with FAWCO activities.

- ❖ if you know that someone in your club would be interested in an aspect of FAWCO, photocopy the material and **put it in her hands.**
- ❖ **go out into your community** with FAWCO material: environmental information can be shared with local environmental groups; copies of ***Students*** can be given to host country as well as international schools; during election periods organize voter registration tables at other clubs and venues that Americans frequent.
- ❖ outreach into your community will strengthen both FAWCO's and your club's image; your club members are more likely to respond when they hear your **information presented in different ways and in different locations.**
- ❖ **ask local experts to run workshops or present programs** on FAWCO issues (e.g. local psychologist on special needs).

A LETTER IN RESPONSE TO THE STUDY

What follows are parts of a letter that was sent in response to an article about ***Students*** that appeared in a FAWCO club magazine:

> While I spend most of my time parenting my two children, I am also looking for ways to pursue my interest in child development. Prior to moving to Europe, I used to be a developmental and educational psychologist, doing teaching and research at both Teachers College and Hunter College in New York City. I became very excited this morning when I read your article, and heard that FAWCO was addressing some issues, which I believe to be very important to the international community.
>
> These issues are important to me, both for professional and personal reasons. Before moving here, our family lived in Switzerland. There, at the age of five, my son was diagnosed with Attention Deficit /Hyperactivity Disorder. Although we did all the things families confronting this problem should do (put him on Ritalin, zealously adhered to behavior modification systems and worked closely with his teachers), his international school decided to kick him out after first grade because he was not meeting their academic standards. He had been tested many different ways, and all of these tests showed him to be a bright and intelligent child. The teachers also said that his behavior was no longer disruptive since he had been on the medication. But because he was not reading fluently at the age of six, they believed that it would be better for him if he pursued his education elsewhere.
>
> Given my background, I felt that not only was this conclusion unfair, it was based on a rigid definition of optimal learning and development. The school's philosophy of instruction was for six-year-olds to sit still and learn from the board, and then do work sheets all day. The children were also expected to have learned reading in kindergarten, and if they did not read in first grade, they did not receive any additional reading support. This school admitted that over 30% of the students there were having difficulties, but did not wish to change their teaching practices in order to accommodate these students. Their attitude was that these students should go elsewhere.

But the fact of the matter was, there was nowhere else for them to go. German Swiss schools are taught in a non-written dialect for the first three grades, so if my son could have made the transition to German, it would not have been a form that I could understand, nor would it have been any use to him down the road. Although we had a number of conversations with the school about their policies, and how a minimum of 4% of any given population is going to have attention problems, they did not see it as their role to educate these children. It was their goal to attract the quickest and brightest learners. After all, this is what attracts the majority of parents to schools, and the minority of families with children with learning problems "just need to go elsewhere."

But Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia, etc. occur at a reliable rate, even in normal populations, which include families on overseas assignments. Ultimately, I ended up taking my son and daughter back to the United States, to the public school district where I grew up, and our family had to live separately on two continents. Fortunately, I was raised in a very good public school system (it has been consistently rated in the top 100 nationwide), and they were able to identify my son's problems and help him immediately. Their philosophy of education was one of inclusion rather than exclusion, and they made it their policy to teach to different learning styles.

During the first two months that we were there, his improvement was miraculous. First, the school noticed that he was a phonetic reader, and therefore would benefit from learning phonetic and word attack strategies. He also had a wonderful teacher who respected him as a learner and as an individual. Within two months, he was reading fluently (he no longer qualified for their reading support program) and he was a motivated and enthusiastic contributor in class.

After we were able to understand our son's needs more fully, we wanted to be once again reunited as a family. But there were still no options for us in Switzerland. So my husband persuaded his company to move us to England. After reviewing six international schools, we finally chose one where the teaching methods were most similar to those practiced in the US.

Since we have been here, our son continues to do as well as he can. On his recent standardized tests, he was in the 80th percentile for reading comprehension. Unfortunately however, the time we can spend with my husband is limited, because he still must be in Switzerland two to three days per week. While we have found a way to make our situation work, our compromise is costly to us in terms of the time we have together as a family, as well as to my husband's company, who has to take on the additional financial burden of flying my him back and forth from Switzerland, reimbursing his hotel expenses, and providing him with two offices instead of one.

On a more positive note, the school that my son now attends is making every effort to accommodate the learning needs of its students. This past January, the school helped the parents form a support group for families with children who have attention deficits, and they are also investing a great deal of money in a curriculum designed specifically for considering individual differences in learning styles. Unfortunately, however not all international schools share this commitment, since special needs generally do not attract the majority of families or funding. It is my hope that

FAWCO can help other schools recognize the need for helping all children. When schools adopt standards that consider individual differences, the entire student body benefits - not only those with special needs.

The remainder of this letter appears under the section entitled ***Future Considerations***.

LEGAL RIGHTS FOR LEARNING DIFFERENTLY STUDENTS

Thanks to the Internet, it is now relatively easy to find out what legal rights your learning differently student has, no matter where in the world you might be living. In the United States, you can check out the US Department of Education (see **Resources** - *Websites*). Here you will learn that:

> The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that all children have available to them a free and appropriate education designed to meet their unique needs. Changes in the percentage of total public elementary and secondary enrollment and the distribution of students with disabilities affect the level of effort required of educators and policymakers to comply with the current law and help them to forecast the need for future resources.

It is interesting to note that:

- The number of students participating in federal programs for children with disabilities has increased at a faster rate than total public school enrollment. Between 1977 and 1995, the number of students who participated in federal programs for students with disabilities increased 47%, while total public school enrollment decreased by 2%.
- Between 1977 and 1995, the percentage of children with specific learning disabilities as a percentage of total K-12 enrollment rose from 2 to 6%, while those with speech or language impairments or mental retardation decreased slightly.

Do more children learn differently today than in the past, or do these figures reflect the growing public awareness that many student's difficulties do not lie in inattention or laziness but in teaching methods that are not meeting their needs?

In the UK you can find out about dyslexia and the disabled students allowance (see **Resources** – *Websites*):

> The allowance is divided into three sections:
>
> 1. A technical support allowance of up to 3420 pounds. This is for the purchase of major capital equipment, e.g. computers.
> 2. An allowance for non-medical helpers up to a maximum of 4550 pounds. Non-medical helpers include interpreters for deaf students, proofreaders, etc.
> 3. A general purpose allowance up to a maximum of 1140 pounds. This can pay for consumable goods such as cassettes, printer cartridges or photocopying.
>
> To obtain the grant the student (or someone acting on the student's behalf) must apply to his/her Local Education Authority.

The European Children in Crisis site (see **Resources** – *Websites*) has a section on Member State Provision, which lists possibilities in all 15 of the European member states.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

International schools are not subject to the rules, regulations and laws that most national schools are. But many are members of associations that have standards of accreditation.

The following is taken from the Website (http://www.ecis.org/) of the European Council of International Schools:

> Since its establishment in 1970, the ECIS programme of **School Evaluation and Accreditation** has become the established norm for schools seeking international recognition. Over one hundred schools in fifty-six countries are now in the programme, which continues to develop on a worldwide basis.
>
> . . . It has been developed to offer an effective global system of accreditation which:
> - fosters excellence in all stages of school-based education
> - encourages school improvement through a process of continuous self-study and peer evaluation
> - assures a school and the constituencies it serves that an accredited institution provides a quality education programme for students based upon clearly defined goals and objectives that are appropriate to the unique school population served

Their Standards of Accreditation are concerned with, among many other things, Special Needs Education. What follows are their standards in this area:

1. There shall be effective procedures for identifying and addressing the special needs of students with learning disabilities.
2. There shall be effective procedures for identifying and addressing the special needs of students of exceptionally high ability and/or exceptional talent.
3. The school shall have an adequate number of trained special needs personnel.
4. If children with learning disabilities or who have remedial needs are admitted, the school shall provide specific curriculums and programs to meet identified needs.

LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

Some schools, in particular international schools, don't always have a budget that will support an adequate number of special needs teachers. One help might be to hire learning support assistants. The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) lists recommendations for training such assistants on its Internet site, www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk/. There they state that:

> The BDA wishes to encourage the training of assistants to teachers in order for such assistants to be able to facilitate effectively the learning of pupils with specific learning difficulties, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The BDA recommendations and criteria . . . are made with the understanding that teacher assistants must work under the direction of the classroom teacher and that training is intended to enhance this supportive role. It is not intended to suggest that these assistants should function independently to supplant the teacher's responsibilities.

Such in-class assistance supports mainstreaming in a very effective manner. In many cases when a family is living abroad, international school education might be the only real option

available for their learning differently children. If necessary and as a last resort, it might be possible for the family to hire the in-class assistant themselves if this is the only way that the international school will grant admission.

Enrollment in a national school that does not use the student's native language may further complicate the student's learning process. The following is from an article written by a mother who was living in Germany:

> Unfortunately we have learned there is little room in school systems throughout Europe for children with any sort of difficulty that might inhibit their ability to learn. Given the uniform nature of instruction and absence of individualization in most schools, even a teacher aware of learning difficulties in a child will have little chance of modifying the classroom curriculum, rhythm or teaching style so the affected child can cope. For this reason, placing a child like Geoffrey in a local European school is out of the question.
>
> As with any school selection, homework is required of the parents. Speak up and be specific about their needs. Bring records along for interviews if possible. This is risky because no one wants a preconceived notion of their child imposed on prospective teachers. However, we have found it worse not to speak up. Sometimes the ill will created by a child's behavior is damaging beyond repair.
>
> It is imperative to receive a proper diagnosis for any and all learning difficulties. . . And most importantly, be involved and alert to what is happening. Parents of children who have to work harder must advocate for their child.[1]

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

What follows is the conclusion of ***A Letter in Response to the Study***:

> I believe that FAWCO can play a very important role in helping families facing the problems outlined in your article. Based on my experience, I believe the problem we encountered with the school in Switzerland stems from two fundamental aspects of small independent overseas schools. The first is that these schools simply do not have the resources to attract and support their faculty. Unlike schools in the US that subscribe to outstanding inservice support programs, the overseas teacher is often poorly trained, poorly paid, and poorly informed. As I stated earlier, I also believe that this kind of support is often a low priority for these schools, because financial attention to these issues is not considered important for attracting families.
>
> Secondly, the children who attend these schools are generally there for only two years (sometimes less). Quite often, these families are so busy orienting themselves to the new environment, they don't have the energy to address the school in the consistent manner that is sometimes necessary to get them to consider the non-traditional learner's needs. Therefore, these independent overseas schools are not consistently held accountable for their practices, as schools with more stable populations are.

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[1] Grossman, Susan. "When a child stumbles academically, where do you turn if you live overseas?" ***Transatlantic American***. March/April 1998. No. 16. p. 14-15.

This is where I see FAWCO's role as crucial. In defining standards for these international schools, and creating a "bill of rights," FAWCO is in a position of applying on-going pressure on these schools to become better informed in helping the non-traditional learner. FAWCO can be the consistent voice when the parents themselves cannot.

Overall, I agree with all of the important points made in your article, and I applaud FAWCO's effort in taking on this challenging problem. The only assertion that I question is that there are reliable methods for identifying non-traditional learners before kindergarten. Assessment is an expensive and timely process, and its' predictive validity is limited until the child has entered primary school. I believe that one way that FAWCO can help parents in this process is to identify competent physicians and psychologists within each local community, who can be a potential resource for families confronting many of these issues.

I'm sure that you did not expect such a long letter when you wrote your article. It's just that I'm so excited to see that FAWCO is tackling these issues.

Another reader wrote:

I don't know how things are for Belgian citizens living abroad, but the Greek government has Greek, state-supported public schools for their citizens abroad, i.e. in Germany. I know the French government does the same thing for their French citizens in Greece. Isn't it a shame that the strongest economic power does not do this for its children? An economist parent at the American Community School here recently figured out that he is paying $18,000 for his child to attend elementary school if you factor in salaries, cost of living, etc. I do feel it would be very beneficial to the US to have these bi-cultural children educated in the American system.

THE LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

The Haags Centrum voor Onderwijsbegeleiding in the Netherlands is currently involved in a very interesting project which they describe as follows:

The Lighthouse project is a collaborative effort between the Dutch and International educational communities. The aim of the project is to provide English language-based education for children with special education difficulties. The target group for the project is children between the ages of four and twelve who have educational needs that cannot be met in a mainstream school setting.

This initiative came about as the result of a research project conducted in The Hague. A final report was issued in January 1998 which investigated the existing services for international special needs students in the area. The entire report is available on the Internet, **www.hco.nl/lh.htm.** The following excerpts come from this ***Lighthouse Report***:

1.1.1 Education of expatriate students

Different countries have different policy and practice with regard to the education of their expatriate children-citizens. The Flying Dutchman research project (1992) has

shown that the seven countries involved in the investigation (i.e. United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Sweden, Japan and the Netherlands) had the following in common:

1. Education of the children of military families living abroad was seen as part of the country's own educational system and organized by the government.
2. Education of all other expatriate families was seen as a private issue for those families and the employers that send them. As a result, private schools have been founded by parents to meet the educational needs of these expatriate children.

However, the governments vary in the extent to which they support or take over the initiative of those parents starting private schools abroad. The Flying Dutchman Report shows that Germany and France have developed educational policy for their citizens abroad as part of their foreign cultural policy. The governments of these two countries finance the schools and set standards with regard to the organization and educational requirements.

Neither the US nor the UK has developed such policy, while Japan and The Netherlands have selected a position somewhere in between these two groups.

1.1.1 Dutch Law, Children's Rights, Mental Health and Economics

Government policy regarding the education of their own expatriate children-citizens is one thing. Catering for the needs of expatriate children settled in a particular country is another. Dutch Law had made school attendance compulsory for all resident children.

. . . The Rights of the Child as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 (articles 28 and 29) states the right of children to education suited to their needs, and also provides a justification for adequate educational service provision for expatriated students.

In terms of mental health, meeting the needs of the expatriate students with special needs is crucial, as the well being of the families forced to put their children in inadequate educational settings is at stake.

In economic terms, the availability of adequate educational services for a reasonably wide range of educational needs of expatriate students seems an important factor for companies deciding on an appropriate location for settlement. For an international city like The Hague, the question is whether it can afford to have an incomplete educational infrastructure. There is anecdotal evidence that the unavailability of sufficiently broad educational provisions has been a factor for at least some international companies to decide against settlement in the region.

2.2 Parents

2.2.1 Some characteristics:

For twelve of the seventeen families (who participated in ***The Lighthouse Report***), the Netherlands was their first posting. Special needs were identified after posting here in eleven of the cases.

2.2.2 Enrollment:

. . . However, there was a striking case in which the child had been identified as having severe speech problems and had been placed in a low level learning program in his previous school. The school records that were sent to the current school did not show any of this.

2.2.3 School Career:

Parents comments: (not all are listed)

Parents referred to denial of the problems at the school and a lack of specialized knowledge.

3 Findings: Needs (not all are listed)

- *Placement facility for children with severe special needs*: Children with severe needs who are not accepted for enrollment as well as children whose special needs can not/no longer be met at existing international schools need an educational setting that is able to meet their needs.

4 Findings: Comments/Suggestions

School-based:

- . . . The suggestion was made for a standard transfer form for use by all international schools.
- . . . More material resources (space!) for special education services
- Improvement of international schools' expertise regarding special education: teacher training of both special education teachers and regular classroom teachers (e.g. differentiation, inclusion, curriculum and test modification).
- Improvement of consistency in approach to special needs between schools, that is: between IGO schools and between departments within large schools.

Community-based: (not all are listed)

- More collaboration between international schools: sharing and exchange of available special needs services.
- International schools should come to agreed guidelines for assessment of special needs children.
- More collaboration between international schools and the Dutch special education system.
- Adequate network (information and procedures) to access special needs personnel in the area, including Dutch professionals (on consulting or part-time basis).
- Publication of a special needs information booklet for international students, in all relevant languages (including addresses of specialists, institutions, etc.)
- International employers should clarify what they are willing to pay and for how long.
- International employers should be informed of realistic possibilities of special needs education in international settings.
- International employers should accept some accountability when a special needs child is prematurely dismissed and help resolve the problem.
- Governments have a role to play in service provision for international special needs students: it is a Europe-wide issue.

Family-based:

- Families should set *realistic* long-term goals for their special needs children.
- Families should provide mutual support and sharing among families with special needs children.
- Parents should do advocacy for their special needs child and not rely on others to take command.

5 Conclusions: (not all are listed)

Special Needs:

- The number of special needs children who are not/no longer accepted seems to be increasing, and involved at least 20 students last school year.
- Several case studies presented to the research team show that referrals/rejections of children with severe special needs are difficult for the families involved, painful, time consuming and full of uncertainty regarding the outcome.

Enrollment:

- There is a gap between school philosophy and special education practice.
- Parents' expectations are not tuned in to international education.

School career:

- Administration in the private schools evaluated existing internal service provision more positively than either parents or staff.
- Almost no networking exists between international special education service providers nor with their counterparts in the Dutch system.

Miscellaneous:

- Education of international special needs children is not just a matter for their parents and international schools, but employers and educational authorities/governments also have a role to play.

6 Recommendations: (not all are listed)

At Community Level:

- Start a *special education forum* for coordination and regular evaluations of special education services in the international schools, involving representatives of administration, service providers, parents and the international assessment team. This should not be limited to the Netherlands. It should be considered whether the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) has a role to play in this development.
- Start a *central special education unit* with English as the language of instruction for special needs students (ages 4-11) whose needs can not be met by the existing schools. Jointly funded by international companies and the Dutch government, this unit should be run as a Stichting (foundation). The unit should have maximum inclusion possibilities.
- All international schools should encourage and facilitate the support groups so that they (continue to) organize relevant and easily accessible activities for families with special need students (conferences; courses; information evenings, etc.)
- International employers should guarantee reimbursement of all costs for special education services as well as for other necessary services related to special needs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

BOOKS

ESPECIALLY FOR STUDENTS:

Author, A True Story
Lester, Helen. 1997. Houghton Mifflin Company, 215 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10003. http://www.hmco.com/trade/.
A book for young, aspiring writers (primary school level) who may or may not be learning differently students by an author who is one. Helen Lester tells about her life from age three to the present, describing some of the many hurdles she had to overcome to attain her goals, including mirror writing.

The following suggestions come from **The International Dyslexia Association** website (see below); this is only a partial listing.

The Worst Speller in Jr. High
Janover, Caroline. Edited by Rosemary Wallner. 1995. Free Spirit Publishing, Inc., 400 First Avenue North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401. www.freespirit.com.
The worst speller in junior high is an almost-14-year-old girl, named Katie, who has aspirations to become a P.K. ("popular kid") and start going out with boys by Thanksgiving, or by Christmas at the latest. As she copes, she faces embarrassments about her dyslexia, but becomes appreciative of her learning differences and the differences in others.

My Name is Brain/Brian
Betancourt, Jeanne. 1993. New York: Scholastic, Inc.
A book about Brian and his sixth grade year in school where he learns to respect his own intelligence and creativity and embarks on the path toward managing his dyslexia.

No One To Play With
Osman, Betty & Blinder, Henriette. Academic Therapy Publications, 20 Commercial Blvd., Novato, CA 94949, (415) 883 33 14.
Describes the problems children with learning disabilities face every day, including getting along with others and dealing with family crises.

Do Bananas Chew Gum?
Gilson, Jamie. 1980. Pocket Books.
A story for kids about a boy with a spelling disability, his feelings, and eventual understanding of his learning difference.

Get Off My Brain: A Survival Guide for Lazy Students
McCutcheon, Randall. Free Spirit Publishing, Inc., 400 First Avenue North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401. www.freespirit.com.
A wit-and-wisdom book for high school and college students which helps them to understand differences in learning and teaching styles and ways to cope in the classroom.

College and the High School Student with Learning Disabilities: The Student's Perspective
Wren, Carol. 1987. DePaul University/ Project Learning Strategies, DePaul University, SAC 220, 2323 N. Seminary, Chicago, IL 60614.
This booklet discusses, through the stories of two learning disabled students, what college is like and what students can do while still in high school to prepare.

ESPECIALLY FOR ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVE DISORDER:

National Institute of Mental Health Report: Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder Handout
Can be found at www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/adhd.html/#adhd6

ESPECIALLY FOR TEACHERS:

Day-To-Day Dyslexia in the Classroom
Pollock, Joy and Waller, Elisabeth. 1994. Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE, Great Britain.

Spelling Revisited (or: Does it really matter?)
Stirling, E. G. 1996. Printing Resources, The University of Sheffield, Bolsover Street, Sheffield S3 7NA, Great Britain.

Help for the Dyslexic Adolescent
Stirling, E. G. 1995. St. David's College. Available from E. G. Stirling, 114 Westbourne Road, Sheffield, S10 2 QT, Great Britain.

The following two books are available from:
Hawthorne Educational Services, Inc.
800 Gray Oak Drive
Columbia, MO 65201 USA
Tel: (800) 542 16 73
Fax: (800) 441 95 09

Ready to Use Learning Disabilities Activity Kit
Harwell, Joan. Catalogue #APP05. Price: $27.95.

Taming the Dragons; Real Help for Real School Problems
Setley, Susan. Catalogue # AST01. Price: $23.00.
A book of strategies for working with students with all kinds of learning disabilities.

FOR EVERYONE:

A Little Edge of Darkness
Faludy, Alexander & Faludy, Tanya. 1996. Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd., 116 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JB, England and 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007, USA.
A boy's and a mother's triumph over dyslexia. Even though severely dyslexic, Alexander Faludy was the youngest person ever to pass the English Literature GCSE, at the age of nine, and an A level, at the age of eleven. Very readable.

Overcoming Underachieving: An action guide to helping your child succeed in school
Goldstein, S.D. and Mather, N. 1998. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
An excellent resource for families with children who are struggling with a variety of learning difficulties, including attention deficits and dyslexia.

TAPES

AUDIO

Many Ways to Learn: Young People's Guide to Learning Disabilities
Ben-Ami, Uzi, Ph.D. and Stern, Judith, M.A. 1 Cassette: 90 Minutes; Magination Press, 19 Union Square West, New York, New York, 10003. Phone: (800)825 30 89 or (212)924 33 44. Cost: $14.95.
Designed for students ages 8-14. Contains one student's description of his own learning difficulty. Has a section on computers and software. Many practical suggestions on how to study, do homework and take tests.
Also available is a book to accompany the tape, **Many Ways to Learn**. Order #4746.

Books on Tape:
The following information comes from **The International Dyslexia Association** website (see *Websites*):

Sometimes it is helpful to have recorded textbooks for school or novels for pleasure reading. In addition to your local bookstore, there are organizations that have books on tape:

- Library of Congress
  National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
  1291 Taylor Street, NW
  Washington, D.C. 20542
  (202) 707-5100
- Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic
  20 Roszel Road
  Princeton, NJ 08540
  (609) 452-0606
  This is a non-profit organization that provides recorded and computerized textbooks at all academic levels to people who cannot effectively read standard print because of visual impairment, learning disability, or other physical disability. Their 75,000 title audio library is the largest educational resource of its kind in the world.

VIDEO

ESPECIALLY FOR TEACHERS:

Dyslexia in the Primary Classroom
The BBC in association with the British Dyslexia Association. 1997. Running time: 40 minutes. Copies of the tape and an accompanying booklet are available from BBC Educational Developments, PO Box 50, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7EZ.
Price: 29.99 pounds. This packet was produced as part of the BBC *Teaching Today* series.

Language Shock – Dyslexia Across Cultures
European Children in Crisis in association with the BBC. 1998. Running time: 29 minutes. Cost: 42.50 ECU. Copies of the tape and an accompanying guide, which contains an extensive list of important addresses in the countries of the European Union, are available from European Children in Crisis, 1 Rue Defacqz, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: 32 2 537 48 36. Fax: 32 2 537 92 12. www.ecic.be
This Multimedia Training Pack is an essential tool for induction and in-service training for all teachers in multilingual, multicultural schools.

FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

Last One Picked . . . First One Picked On – Learning Disabilities and Social Skills
Lavoie, Richard. Produced by WETA-TV, Washington, D.C. and distributed by PBS Home Video, P.O. Box 751089, Charlotte, NC 28275-1089. Tel: 1 800 645 4727. Fax: 1 703 739 8131. www.pbs.org/shop Cost: $49.95. Running time: 62 minutes.
Playing with friends is a daily ritual for most children. But kids with learning disabilities are often isolated and rejected. This video addresses the social problems these children face – and offers some practical solutions for parents and teachers.

ESPECIALLY FOR STUDENTS:

We're Not Stupid: Living with a Learning Disability
Mandell, Fonya. Media Projects, Inc., 5215 Homer Street, Dallas, TX 75206, (214) 826 38 69. www.mediaprojects.org.
A former Landmark School student who filmed and produced this moving documentary of her classmates' experiences with dyslexia. (comment taken from **The International Dyslexia Association** website)

WEBSITES

GENERAL:

European Children in Crisis: http://www.ecic.be/
Contains information on language shock, provisions regarding specific learning difficulties in the various member states of the European Union, a page for students, parents, teachers and therapists, future events, and useful links.
Languages: currently English, German and French; eventually will have all the European languages.

European Council of International Schools: **www.ecis.org/spain/accred.htm**
Contains their standards for accreditation.

The Lighthouse Project: **www.hco.nl/lh.htm**
The final report, January 1998, of a research project which investigated the existing services for international special needs students in The Hague. The text of this report is found on the site of Haags Centrum voor Onderwijsbegeleiding.

The Times Educational Supplement: **www.tes.co.uk/**
Has a wonderful library of past articles, including those relating to special education.

DYSLEXIA:

Special Education Resources on the Internet:
http://wshs.luminet.net/sped/sped.html
links to a number of special education sites:
especially good is **SERI: www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.htm**

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA): www.interdys.org/
(formerly The Orton Dyslexia Society)
Contains a wonderful "Kids Only" section for children ages 6-15 with age-appropriate information, suggested books and tapes, and much more.

World Dyslexia Network Foundation: **www.surrey.ac.uk/Psychology/WDNF/**
In collaboration with the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey, UK, this site is designed to provide a forum for submitting and browsing research. It first came online in 1996 to coincide with the 100 years anniversary of the first diagnosis of dyslexia.

The Kamara Centre for Learning and Communication Disorders:
wysiwyg://105//http://www.geocities.com.Athens/4727/
Lists some behaviors that might signal need for assessment and/or treatment; good site for people interested in language-based learning disorders.

The Dyslexia Institute: **www.dyslexia-inst.org.uk/**
This institute is involved in psychological and educational assessment, teaching and teachers' training programs; offers a multimedia literacy development programme called "Units of Sound."

Dyslexia and the Disabled Students Allowance:
www.hensa.ac.uk/dyslexia/education/higher_further/dsa/karens_summary.html
Provides details of entitlements in Great Britain.

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER:

Attention Deficit Disorder in Europe: **www.pavilion.co.uk/add/**
Still under construction; currently available in English, Dutch and German; is attempting to provide ADD info per country.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

The Multimedia Training Pack produced by European Children in Crisis and the BBC contains a guide which lists addresses for information on learning difficutlties in all the member countries of the European Union (see *Video*)

Belgium:

- Professor Marina Danckaerts (Psychiatrist specialising in AD/HD)
  University Hospital Gasthuisberg
  Dienst Kinderpsychlogie
  Herestraat 49
  B- 3000 Leuven
  32 16 34 38 21

England:

- Dyspraxia Foundation
  West Alley
  Hitchin
  Herts SG5 1EG
  44 1462 454 986
  Fax: 44 1462 455 052
- Learning Assessment Centre
  44 Springfield Road
  Horsham
  West Sussex RH 12 2 PD
  44 1 403 240 002
  Specializes in assessment and treatment of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders

France:

- SPRINT (Sharing Professional Resources, Ideas and New Techniques)
  A Paris-based, English-speaking group which includes professionals in many special needs areas. Contact people are:
  Frances Ryan 33 1 42 22 90 62
  Jane Plimsoll 33 1 46 26 55 37

Germany:

- Munich International School
  Lisa Ross, Junior School learning Center
  49 (0) 81 51 366 403

Ireland:

- The Minister of Education & Science
  Mr. Michael Martin T.D.
  Marlboro Street
  Dublin 1
  353 1 873 47 00
- Department of Education
  Special Education Section
  Mr. Liam Kilroy, Principal Officer
  Athlone,
  Co. Westmeath
  353 506 21 363
- ADD/ADULT Family Support Group
  11 Summerfield Grn.
  Blanchardstown D15
  353 1 822 20 59
- ASPIRE
  (The Asperger Syndrome Assocaiton of Ireland)
  85 Woodley Park
  Kilmacud, D 14
  353 1 295 13 89
- The Dyspraxia Assocaition
  47 Mount Eagle Drive
  Leopardstown heights
  Sandyford, D 18
  353 1 295 71 25
- The Irish Society of Autism
  16/17 Lr. O'Connell Street
  Dublin 1
  353 1 874 46 84

Netherlands:

- ACCESS (Administrative Committee to Coordinate English-Speaking Services)
  Plein 24
  NL-2511 CS The Hague
  31 70 346 25 25
- Haags Centrum voor Onderwijsbergeleiding (The Lighthouse Project)
  Maarten Bakker
  Zandvoortselaan 14
  NL-2554 EM Den Haag
  31 70 448 28 28
  Fax: 31 70 448 28 29
  Email: bakkm@hcl.nl
- Stichting C.S.N. (Children with Special Needs)
  Jim Taylor
  Dr. schaepmanlaas 4
  NL-2251 AV Noordwijkerhout
- 31 25 237 6771

  Welmoed Perrin-Meijer
  van Hamellaan 38
  NL-2252 BN Voorschoten
  31 71 561 1597

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE
FOR
STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL CHALLENGES

An Update To
Students Who Learn Differently

In order to present some additional information that has come to the attention of the Educational Support Committee and to attempt to assess what effect, if any, the study, "Students Who Learn Differently," might have had on our FAWCO community, the committee plans on presenting an update to this report at the London Conference in March.

Questionnaire:
To this end, the ESC requests that you fill out the following questionnaire. Perhaps you could request the help of the person(s) in your community who filled out the original questionnaire last year.

When is the deadline?
All questionnaires should be received at the address below by **November 20, 1998**.

Where to send the information?
Any questions may be addressed at any time and the questionnaire returned by post, fax or email to:

Susan van Alsenoy, ESC Chair
Grote Stoppelbergen 5
B-2040 Zandvliet
Belgium

Phone/Fax: 32 3 568 80 56 (the fax is always on)
Email: vanAlsenoy@compuserve.com

Name of your club:

_____

Name(s) of person(s)a filling out this questionnaire:

_____

_____

Phone(s): _____
Fax(es): _____
Email: _____

1. Since the Athens Interim Conference, how has your club informed your members of the existence of the "Students Who Learn Differently" report? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. How many, if any, members have requested to see a copy of the report?
_____

3. Do the people who have read the report feel that they have derived any benefit from it? Please explain.
_____
_____
_____

4. Do you have any suggestions as to how the report might of been made more effective?
_____
_____
_____

5. Do you have any additions or corrections to the report? Additions to the resource materials are particularly welcome. Please use additional paper if necessary.